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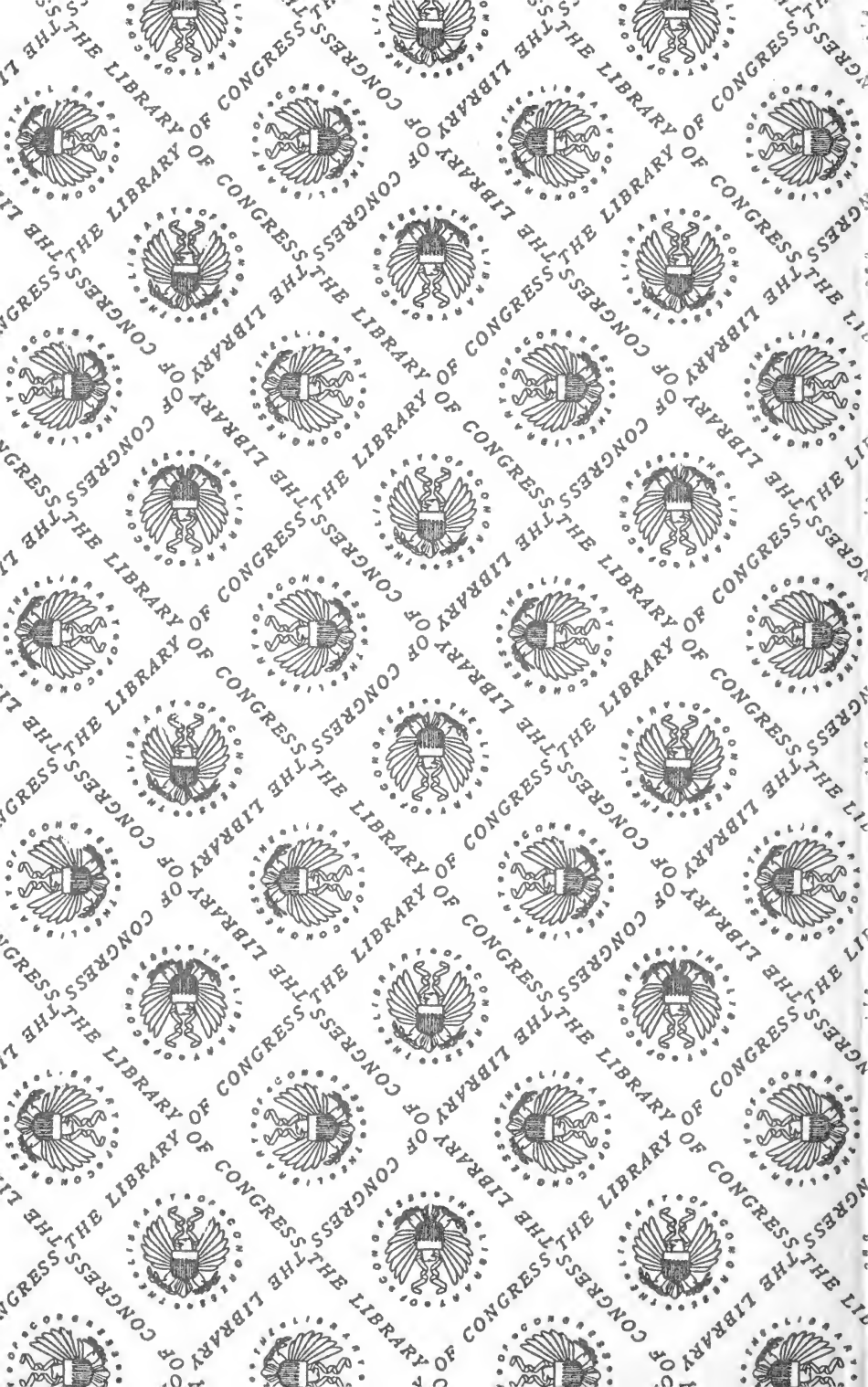
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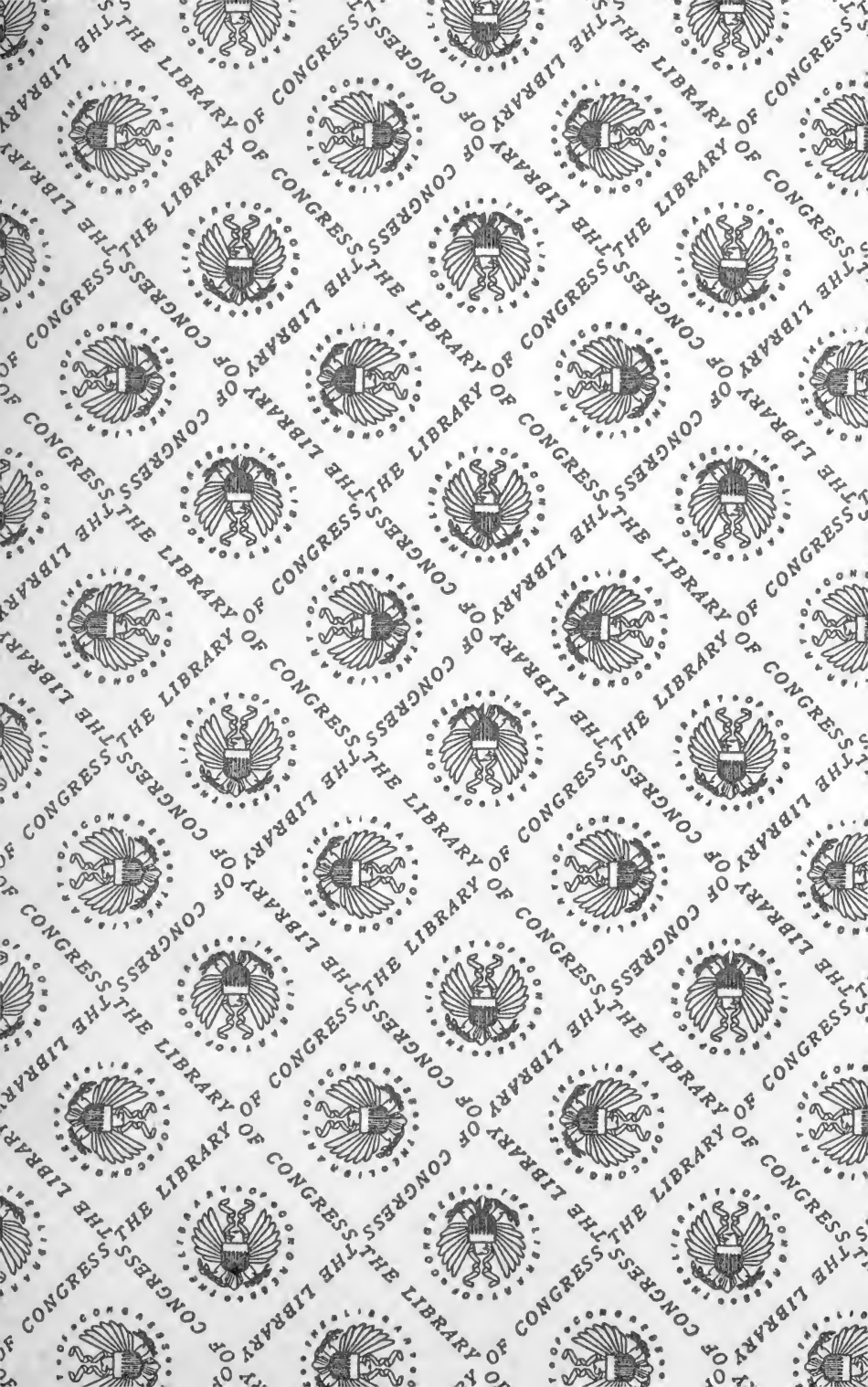
1908

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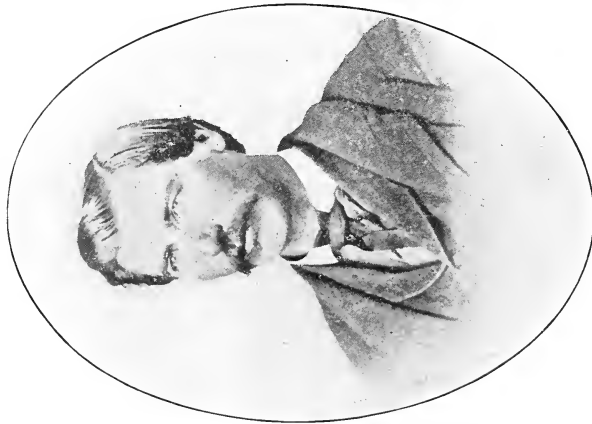
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THE AUTHOR



1860



1878



1902

H A S H

CHOPPED, SEASONED AND WARMED UP

—BY—

MARCUS P. WHEELER

WINDSOR, WIS.

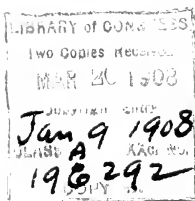
TAKE NOTICE !

This “hash” is composed of some rythmical “scräps”—
(A mixture of politics, pathos and gall;
Sentiment, satire, religion,—perhaps).
And I do not advise you to read it at all!

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by Marcus P. Wheeler.

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TIMES PRINT, De Forest, Wis.
1908.



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1908



PREFACE

DEAR READER:

This "hash" is offered to you strictly on its merits; and sold like Castoria, under a guarantee of "satisfaction or money refunded."

The dates appended indicate that some of the "scraps" have a peculiar value as "prehistoric remains," since they date back fifty years or more.

Later, as the scramble for bread and butter was less wearing upon the flesh, the spirit moved more frequently and was never grieved away by mercenary attempts to make merchandise of the fruits of the spirit.

These fragments were written, always upon sudden impulse, usually at one sitting, and have been the writer's diversion. They are now published to please a few partial friends, and, as another kind of diversion. Possibly some of them may touch responsive chords, in hearts of heathen men and women who read them. Who knows?

They cannot be called poetry.—(Poets "do not understand themselves," they are so ecstatic!) Poets, present the most extravagant propositions as great truths! Stern contact with this world has taught the writer that "All gates" do not "unlock to those who persevere," either in literature, business, war, love or burglary! He prefers truth, to optimism. Therefore these scraps are merely rhymes and blank verse, not poetry. READ THEM, IF YOU DARE!

THEORY VS. EXPERIENCE.

You may be whatsoever you resolve to be!—Theory.

A school boy heard this optimistic chant,
And straightway girded up his loins, for life
Among the noble, great, and true of earth.
Each day he dreamed of worthy deeds by him
Achieved. His dreams and aspirations seemed
Forerunners of a prosperous career,
Abounding in success. Anon there came
Across his path a current of events
That swept him from his course. But gathering
The remnant of his shattered hopes he set
His face toward another goal. A new
Ambition hurried him along by day;
By night his dreams were still of worthy deeds.
But ever as he plodded on his way
Some strange and unexpected circumstance
Would suddenly appear to block his path
And change his course once more. Then he again
Must trim his sails anew, put up the helm
And sail along the course his fate decrees.
(But this is life; not something poets dream.)

* * *

Amid his interrupted plans and hopes
There came to him a noble, loving soul
To share his fate, his struggles, his defeats;
To sympathize, to counsel, to console,
Encourage effort, rashness to repress;
To be that highest, best of earthly boons,—
A faithful wife. And when his every thought
And all the daily duties of his life
Were close entwined about her own, when they
Had journeyed on near threescore years and ten,
She suddenly was summoned from his side
And he was left alone! Where now are all

Those rosy youthful dreams? Where will his bark
 Be driven next by the fierce tidal wave?
 Of this feel sure: He who has sailed the sea
 Of life thus long against the wind and tide,
 Will not give up the ship, nor anchor cast,
 Nor let the old hulk drift upon the rocks!
 The rocky shores, and barren isles
 Of disappointments met and overcome
 Have schooled him for this day. And though his heart,
 His very soul be rent and torn, he still
 Must hoist the mainsail, take the helm, and press
 Forever on! (And sail, and sail, and sail!
 For this is life and not the poet's dreams!)
 But while he sails, his memory recalls
 Those high resolves, those happy, youthful dreams
 The optimistic faith with which he wrought—
 Those disappointments all along his path,
 The tragic ending of his earthly hopes,
 And then he looks aloft through misty eyes,
 While gripping hard the helm, and cries aloud
 "THERE is a destiny that shapes our lives,
 Resolve whate'er we may!"

June 1, 1907.

??? FOR NATURALISTS.

One morning in Autumn while out for a ride
 Some thousands of voices along the roadside
 Broke forth into song, as we trotted along,—
 And gave us a symphony, hearty and strong.

The birds left behind us would pass on the word
 Then lapse into silence with perfect accord;
 While all the near tree tops were full of their glee;
 And it certainly seemed they were all singing for me.

But who trained that choir? And which of them led?
What fills the small space in a tiny bird's head?
And how could the birdies hatched only last spring
Acquire ability anthems to sing?
Instinct? Heredity? Constant selection?
Shall we say evolution has led to perfection?
Did they sing the same song in the morn of creation?
Or have they at times had Divine Revelation?

* * *

Have you ever sat down, at the falling of night
To watch, till the dawning of morning's grey light,
While gnats and mosquitoes were tuning their lyres
And lightning-bugs fitfully poking their fires?
Your musket at ready, with every sense
Alert and acute, nerves painfully tense;—
(For the reason that just over there in the wood
Is a good Christian soldier who thirsts for your blood?)

Upon such an occasion, I heard from the marsh
A discordant bellow, repellant and harsh,
It startled me so that I sprang from the log;—
But shortly discovered 'twas merely a frog!
For quick, in response to his violoncello
Came all the frog parts, from a peep to a bellow.
It was frolic and symphony, blended in one,
And all the frog family joined in the fun.
A silence would follow, till over the marsh
Resounded that signal, discordant and harsh;
Then voice after voice would take up the refrain
And swell the full chorus again, and again!

Now. Who teaches pollywogs anthems to sing?
This question comes back to me, every spring.
Has their song been evolved? Was it thus at creation?
Or has it improved by Divine Revelation?
Do they sing in accordance with natural laws?
Or is all their singing "Just merely because?"

1906.

TO A CENTURY PLANT.

Patient, persistent, ugly thing!
Of what avail is all my care?
To me no benefit you bring—
No fragrance to perfume the air,
No fruit to tempt the appetite,
No colors to dispel my gloom,
No blossoms fair to charm the sight —
You simply take up so much room!

Yet some poor soul, as yet unborn
Perchance may see thy buds unfold
And wondrous bloom thy crest adorn
When I am crumbled into mold!—
Thy patience shall fresh courage give
To toil and strive that good may come,
What matter whether while we live?
SOMETIME, SOMEWHERE, our deeds may bloom.

1904.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.*

I know of a feminine poet
Who often makes Pegasus "go it."
She can reel off a "pome," while at work about home,
And all of her lady friends know it!

She will flatter the dames in a ditty
Quite charming, poetic, and witty.
Call them careless and happy (though hairless and cappy)
And sacrifice truth without pity.

*Suggested by some flattering verses, read at a private house. When the writer PROTESTED, and was told, "write some verses yourself!" He did so.

Though the ladies quite dote on her verses,—
Even school girls, and children and nurses,—
The husbands, and brothers, and several others
Are said to be muttering curses!

For they are ignored by this lady
(As by "Susan," or Elizabeth Cady)—
Which makes it appear, most exceedingly clear
That our future is wofully shady!

In lodge rooms, and clubs, and such places
Our poet ne'er sings of man's graces!
And so, it appears, that before many years,
We'll have to kick over the traces.

When the women are flattered with "sunnits"
Till their heads are too big for their "bunnits,"
Our souls must collapse (and our stomachs perhaps,)
And nothing remain but our "runnits"!

Beware how you "po" then oh poet!
When you catch up your lyre and "blow it"!
We men are so riled, that we may become wild,
And slice off your head 'fore you know it!

And then in extremely short meter
You will hear the stern words of Saint Peter,
"With the goats she must go, to the regions below,
Ananias, is anxious to greet her!"

March 19, 1903.

THE FEMININE POET'S RETORT.

(By permission.)

When new poets appear in the green of the year,
And musical jingles they fling;
I know such Byronics are needing Spring tonics—
Molasses and Sulphur's the thing.

Take it daily my friend, then your troubles will end;
'Twill cure your poetical rash.
Your most whimsical "rile" is produced by your bile,—
Take brimstone before you eat hash!

If you heed this advice, you'll no more deem it nice
To cut off the head of a poet,
Nor be whining for praise, in your baldheaded days,
Turning "wild" if you have to forego it.

With your system renewed, you'll consider it rude
To send gentle poets to Hades.
Your head will grow bigger, you'll cut quite a figure
In eyes of the children and ladies.

This remedial agent, without pomp or pageant.
I recommend freely; I do!
Persevere for a year, without any fear,
There'll be plenty of brimstone for you!

OLYETTE ELLIS.

April 9, 1903.

AN OPEN LETTER.

In bygone days there lived a holy man;—
A prophet he, and one who served the God
Whose messages he bore—('Tis thus the story ran;—
And faltered not; though hard the paths he trod.

And he was mocked by naughty little girls!
Was scorned, abused; yea sometimes he was called
"Old Baldhead!" (Pretty maids with flowing curls
Made sport of him, because his head was bald!

Now Roos-e-velt had ne'er been in Beth-el
And bears still roamed those woods, alert and free.
The prophet turned and cursed those children well!
(Read Second Kings. The sequel there you'll see!)

Old friend, 'tis true that we are no spring chickens.
Our youth departed forty years ago.
(It really seems to beat the very Dickens
That we still act so childish, don't you know!)

You've often found that Rocky Mountain Tea,
Molasses, brimstone, all are useless quite,
For when the "spirit" siezes you, (or me,)
We can't resist it! We just—HAVE to write!

Now should the students the infection take
And youthful rhymers sweep "The Hill" by storm,
'Twere well to call out Brue, Bertrand, or Blake*
And use Formaldehyde, Iodoform.

But as for us, I fear our case is chronic!
(Strict quarantine might help the public some,)
But we're not "licensed" to prescribe a tonic,
Or practice medicine, (away from home!)

And so if we are blest with business gumption
We'll not stock up with drugs of any kind,
Keep brimstone, strictly just for HOME CONSUMPTION
And use it only to "relieve the mind!"

April 16, 1903

*Local Health Officer.

"The Hill"—High School at De Forest.

SUNDAY REFLECTIONS.

("Woe unto him through whom the evil cometh.")

A baby tree. Germ of a stately oak!
With stem erect, and tiny branches, all
Perfect in form, and reaching toward the sky.
A season thus it grows; and then, behold!
The winter's snow or woodman's careless act,
Or hoof of beast, or coney tooth hath marred
The symmetry of growth.

And evermore
A gnarled unsightly trunk and limbs,
That oaken tree shall bear! Yet must it strive
To stand again upright, though all attempts
But serve to make its form the more grotesque!
"For God hath made it so!" And while it lives,
Be it for years, or centuries, that tree
Will seek to stand erect. And while it lives
'Twill be at best a gnarled and misformed thing!

* * *

A little child! The germ wherein are all
The possibilities, and all restraints
Imposed by multitudes of ancestors.
An angel mother guards his tender years,
A doting father guides his boyish feet;
And all his ways are ways of pleasantness.

* * *

Some fiend in human form, or yet perchance
A brutish clown of ready wit possessed;—
Some ill taught, self appointed overseer
Of other men's affairs;—or once again
Another Eve may do the devil's work
And warp, and mar, and scarify his soul
Until its glorious symmetry is lost.
Leaving a character like those we see
About us everywhere. More bad than good:

“Not worse than other men,” but lower far
Than were his possibilities in youth.
Still shall he strive to stand erect and firm;
To reach aloft that he might grasp the hand,
Or touch the garment’s hem of Him, whose law
Still lingers in his heart.

But evermore
A blemished soul remains! And evermore
He strives,—and strives!

“For God hath made him so!”

November, 1904.

KEEP YOUR HAT ON.

“My daddy’s in the hog yard
Where the pigs are getting fat.
You can tell which one is daddy
Because he wears a hat!”
This startling salutation
From a boy of two or three
Aroused some queer reflections
And they still keep haunting me.

If you find yourself in company
With men of low ideals
Where virtue seems a mockery
And naught to them appeals
Save vice and self indulgence
And other things like that,
You can show the manhood in you,
You can always “wear your hat.”

When we see a nice young fellow—
(Such as bummers call a prig)—
Who cultivates good morals
Though compelled to delve and dig,

Who has self respect that holds him
Far above the swinish herd,—
Most any one will know him
Before he says a word.

If a girl is self respecting
She is sometimes called a prude,
(By those who designate a man
As “something of a dude”);
But we never fail to recognize
In woman, or in man,
The quality that makes them try
To be—just—all—they—can!

Should you live beside a frog pond
Must you become a frog?
If swine are all about you
Need you become a hog?
I tell you nay! Stand upright!
Just set your foot down flat;
Uphold the right, oppose the wrong,
Folks will know you by your hat!

1905.

GOD IS LOVE.

Druid, Hindu, Jew, and Christian, each conceives a God of blood.
Human sacrifice by Druids, human gore by Ganges' flood,
Bullock's blood on Jewish altar, human blood upon the cross!
Crude conception of Jehovah!—Is it go'd or is it dross?

He who places stars in orbits, moves all things throughout all space,
Does He ask a bloody tribute from the puny human race?
Does it magnify Jehovah when we sing of pardon won
Through this sacrifice, this bloodshed, through the murder of
God's son?

Let us relegate this idea to the era of the savage;
To the age of demon worship; to the time of war and ravage.
Crucify the sins, and follies; let the songs of bloodshed cease.
Picture God as mild and gentle. Then may come the reign of peace.



WHO KNOWETH?

(Ecclesiastes 3: 21.)

THE SPIRIT OF THE MAN.

Behold a "Business Man". He runs a bank:
 Contributes freely to religious work;
 Oft leads in prayer, does not forget to thank
 The Lord for sending gospel to the Turk.
 He tells his fellow bankers of the trust
 And confidence "reposed in men like us
 To-day". And lo! tomorrow he goes "bust":—
 Pleads guilty; goes to prison; "makes no fuss".
 But widows, orphans, men with calloused hands
 Lose all their scanty savings by his theft!—
 A not uncommon case in Christian lands.—
 "Oh Well! The man still has a spirit left!"

* * *

"THE SPIRIT OF THE BEAST WHICH GOETH DOWNWARD."

A fearful storm descends upon the hills.
 The shepherd sends the collies far and wide
 To guide the sheep across the swelling rills,—
 Our herds must be secure what e'er betide.
 All have returned,—and still one missing flock!
 What next? Why forth into the storm, and cold
 Poor Gyp, a trusty slut of faithful stock,
 Is sent to bring those stragglers to the fold.

Then after many hours, a feeble scratch,
 Her signal at the door, has roused us up.
 Gyp staggers forward, as we raise the latch,
 And in her mouth she bears one new-born pup!—
 But every sheep is home! Not one is lost.
 Despite maternal love, maternal pain,
 Despite the mental agony it cost
 To leave her babes to die 'mid storm and rain
 Her sense of duty held her to her task!
 She gave her life! Gave all she had to give,
 And never seemed to question, or to ask
 Why she should suffer, that the sheep might live!
 Her name will not appear on martyrs' scroll;
 And we must whisper it beneath our breath,
 If we would ask about that collie's soul;—
 And yet?—Poor Gyp was faithful unto death!—
 ("And I perceive that this also is vanity.")

March, 1906

(NOTE: The above was a literal rendering of two incidents related in the same daily paper: and neither is exaggerated in any particular.)

MUDDING BOB IN.

(Wisconsin Politics.)

We have read "Let a sparrow invade
 A nest which the swallows have made;
 They will wall him in fast, and the sparrow at last
 Repents of the trick he has played."

Two country boys, out on a lark, invaded the capitol park
 Were grinding of "mort", and work of that sort
 Continues from sunrise till dark.

Their attention was caught by the din, and they gazed at
 the work with a grin.
 Then one of them said with a wag of his head
 "They're a muddin' the Gov'ner in!"

SUGGESTED BY LINES ENTITLED

PETER AT THE GATE.

A rhymer has told of a woman and man;
(As only a long-winded rhyme maker can);
The woman religious, dogmatic, severe;—
Had warred against evils surrounding her here.
The man was profane; very often he'd choke
His wife, with his oaths, and his nicotine smoke.
While seeing these faults, she avoided a storm;
But labored the harder for public reform.
Now, while to the people she made her appeals
Her husband was left to prepare his own meals;
His mouth was so parched, by the fumes of his pipe
That he often would feast on a cucumber ripe.
Cigars and tobacco depleted his purse
Till a bill from their grocer was met with a curse.
In that way they lived; and in this form they died;
And both, we are told to St. Peter applied.
In the pipe-dreamer's tale, it is said that the man
Was sent into heaven, its beauties to scan:—
While the woman-reformer was shown down below
Where the weather is warm, where they never have snow.
Imagine this selfish and stupid old chump
With a pipe in his teeth, (or an old cigar stump),—
Transplanted to heaven, where virtue, and love,
And all we conceive of the brightness above
Should burst on his vision, and dazzle his sight!
Where right is triumphant because it is, right!
I fancy that he would feel quite out of place
And a shade of discomfort would steal o'er his face.
He would presently ask for permission to go
To the "smoking-room", down in the regions below.
Or, he'd steal, (if the beautiful gates were ajar),
Outside, for a puff at his pipe, or cigar!
And she? Well! Most likely there's something to do,

In the way of reform 'mid that devilish crew
Of wilfully ignorant, foolishly bad,
Who never made use of the talents they had!
Should Peter invite her now, elsewhere to come
She would stay where she is, for it seems like her home.

* * *

Ah! Heaven and hell, are but relative terms!
Each soul is a garden. The soil full of germs.
No place could be heaven to those who are base.
Yet heaven, and hell, are pervading all space.
In placing that couple, beyond any doubt
St. Peter well knew just what he was about!
The husband is now where his swearing must cease.
Without his old pipe he will never know peace.
And surely, the woman can happiness find
In giving old Satan "a piece of her mind"!
And, if she reforms HIM, she possibly can
Succeed in reforming a dissolute man!

1905

MANLY MEN.

(Suggested by an editorial upholding boxing bouts.)

"The manly man is the need of our day."
Pray what is a manly man?
Is it one who will fight if he can't have his way
Regardless of anything others may say?
Is it one who excels in his work, or his play,
Or in battle is leading the van?

Why! This sort of man was the first on the list
To murder his brother man!
(True, Abel was felled by a shillalah twist
For Cain was not versed in the use of his fist,
But he settled his man with a turn of the wrist
Quite as well as the pugilist can).

Was Caesar the sort of a man that we need?
He waded in blood to his knees.
But Sitting Bull likewise made prisoners bleed;—
The African Chieftain will murder for greed;—
There have been just such fellows in every breed
Since our ancestors dwelt in the trees!

Is the manly man necessarily strong?
Well up in the athletic drill?
Nay! Nay! 'Tis the lad who opposes the wrong,
Who will follow the right, and keep pushing along
Though policy's sirens are singing their song,
Or ravens are croaking of ill!

King Og, or young Sampson, Goliath of Gath
AS ANIMALS, score very high.
But combating evils that waken his wrath
By use of the brain, and the manhood he hath
The pigmy scales mountains that lie in his path,
Where giants would never come nigh.

Is it breaking the nose of a fellow, "in fun",
That builds up a manly man?
Why! It seems quite as manly to pull out a gun
And shoot (with your back toward the lamp, or the sun)—
Before your opponent can "pull", or can run,
As to "Land on the heart" when you can!

Compare grand Abe Lincoln with famous John L.
Marconi, with Nelson,—or Britt!
Pasteur, with some trainer with prize fights to sell.
Gladstone;—Fitzsimmons! You know very well
'Tis like spanning the space betwixt heaven and hell—
Between men,—and wild beasts in a pit!

Along with the horrible cannibal feast
The scalping, and burning with fire,
With the old gladiators,—man against beast;—
The duel, and tournament, (swept from the east,)
Manhood is asking,—TRUE manhood at least
That fisticuffs also retire!

LEGS? OR APPENDIX?

When Tweedle Dum attended school, his forte lay in apology.
He patched up many a broken rule with bits of his mythology.
When he arrived at man's estate by going through a college, he
Could learnedly expatiate on "spirits" and biology.

His native talent seemed to point directly toward theology,
But since the clock was out of joint, he dabbled in horology.
Restoring health to sickly clocks, was tiresome monotony.
He added shaves, electric shocks, and practice of phlebotomy.

He drew their circulation out, cured "pursey" men of plethora.
His lancet oft removed their gout; his bills would take their
breath away!

He amputated arms and legs, and won their hearty approbation
By standing them on wooden pegs. "He did so love an operation!"

Now Tweedle Dee scorns Tweedle Dum. He says no living man
can tell

How many went to kingdom come, by lancet and by calomel.
"We save the limbs" says Tweedle Dee. But ere you know what
he's about

He'll start an operating bee, and rip your old appendix out.

With strychnine, ergotine, and drugs, far, far too numerous to
mention

He dopes us like potato bugs. (All with benevolent intention.)

So we to this conclusion come (I think you all agree with me)—

There's little odds twixt Tweedle Dum and scientific Tweedle
Dee.

INFIDELS.

Primeval man adored the blazing sun
Until some "infidel" denied that Sol
Was the supreme and only deity.
Those ancient races practiced solemn rites
Wherein a human sacrifice was thought
To cool Sol's ire when he became too hot.

Sweet Luna's beams are not unbearable
Nor "angry" like the beams of blazing Sol.
Adoring her they offered sacrifice
Of figs, and grapes (with now and then a cat)
That she might furnish somewhat better light,
And shine, at least, a few hours every night.

But I digress,—Through all the centuries
Erroneous ideas, concerning God,
Have only given way to clearer thought
Because of infidels.—Jesus himself
Was crucified by some mistaken Jews.
An infidel? To some of their most cherished views.

Whoever would advance religious thought
Would cast away barbaric tragedy
And raise our estimate of God himself
Above the crude idea that "sacrifice
Of blood," alone could quench his ire:—
Such is an infidel, deserving of hell fire.

Doubting, investigating infidels
Have been the salt of earth. To them we owe
The demolition of a thousand myths.
In their hands no great truth was ever lost,
(Cyclonic infidels arouse religious fear
But even they, oft make the truth more clear.)

The infidels assume no worldly power.
They go not forth with ships, and guns, and swords
To save mistaken men.

But, they refuse
Opinions ready made, which may be wrong!
The modern infidel, as in the past
Would prove all things, and to the truth hold fast.

Feb. 2, 1907

TO J. W. OF MONROE, WIS.

Zeal to establish something seen by faith
Concerning matters far beyond our ken
Through ignorance, intolerance and self conceit
May sometimes turn the wheels of progress back!
Man's happiness does not depend at all
Upon his faith in Paine or Ingersoll!

Implicit faith in myths gives happiness?
Why seek to undermine a happy faith?
If unbelief makes you a better man
Be glad and joyful in your unbelief
But curb the warlike spirit of your pen.
(Be not "intolerant" like other men.)

P. S.—After listening to a sermon from Luke IV., 2: 16 to 30.

Our parson in his morning's sermon, said
"The truth will often times create turmoil.—
At Nazareth, they from the synagogue
Thrust him who came to save the world from sin."
If sure you know the truth, beyond a doubt,
Being inspired YOU MUST SPIT IT OUT!

Feb. 10, 1907

VALENTINE TO THE LEGISLATURE.

(Concerning Capitol Removal.)

Windsor wants the Capitol! Hip! hip! hip, Hoo-ray!
There's lots of room to build it here. We're in the race to stay.
If only some Samaritan will introduce the bill,
We'll easy do the moving act;—it's nearly all down hill!

Old Madison is far too dull, and far too dear a city.
The hotels charge so high for board, it makes the lobby gritty.
We'll guarantee you good brick cheese, with crackers at fair prices
And, in a pinch, perhaps, we'd squeeze some lemon juice, on ices.

If Token Creek will help us pull and show no mean perversity
We'll buy that bluff from Martin Bull, and move the University.
The capitol is bound to come! So what's the use of talking?
Methinks I see its shining dome, and round its walls am walking.

If Oshkosh wants a hospital,—that's something we might give her.
Milwaukee needs a brewery, to rectify the river.
But when it comes to capitols, consider for one minute
How badly they are handicapped, when Windsor says she's in it!

Concerning cost, we're not disposed, to haggle o'er the question.
We guarantee the kind of food, that best promotes digestion.
We make the board and prices right, and, if you like, Cass Gilbert
Can engineer the whole affair. We do not care one,—filbert!

1905.

AN APOSTROPHE.

O thou most subtle and puissant force
Which permeates all space: that leaps
Always from star to star in sportive mood,—
Whence, and what art thou?
When thou dost hurtle through the inner earth
Strange tremors sieze upon her vitals, chasms
Yawn to swallow islands, vineyards, cities,
Farms with all their products, life and wealth!
Anon dost thou bestir thyself anew,
Gird up thy loins for work once more; and then
With giant strength from underneath the tide
Lift to the light of day a continent,—
Or, with thy shoulder mountains topple down!
Tornado, hurricane and tidal wave
Attest thy mighty power. The earthquake shock
And lightning flash, betray thy varied moods.
Withal, a mild and gentle force thou art
Which condescends to serve a telephone exchange
(Where Dago shouts to Russ, or housewife orders
Bones for soup):—to spark the gasoline which moves
The auto of a crazy scorcher: to blow
The bellows of the smith, to light our streets
And wagon tires weld: yea, even to aid
The minions of the law, in their sad task
Of forcing criminals to shuffle off
The mortal coil without the aid of hemp!
Without thee, motion would be lost.
The universe collapse, all life become extinct;
The seismograph, barometer, and weather man
Of less account than vainest vanity!
We meet thy handiwork at every turn
And know in part, thy power for good or ill.
Thy breath can sunder mighty hills, or light
The firefly's fitful lamp at eventide,
Obliterate a blazing star or multiply bacteria!
We fain would learn thy habits, seek thy home,

Thy origin discover. But dare not touch
Thy garment's hem, (without a pair of mits)!
Busy thou art, by day and night, in earth
And throughout space!

A tireless fiendish
Principle art thou, and yet to man beneficent.
We know a little of thy wondrous ways
And call thee many names. But who can search thee out
Or stand before thy face?
One flaming beam of glory from thine eye
Can smite us dead: to come into thy presence
Is to be absorbed!

O thou most subtle
Omnipresent force, whence, and what
Art thou?

1907.

EXPLETIVES.

A poor heathen man in the province of Wind
Was somewhat afflicted with vice
He averaged well with the rest of mankind,
Yet in language was not always nice.
For however well he behaved, when in church,
At a soiree, a concert, or ball;
His temper would oftentimes make a bad lurch.
It would rise, and thus cause him, to fall!

Under great provocation, when something went wrong,
If a toe, or a finger he'd jam
The song he would sing was not Solomon's song!
(It sounded more like "Rot-ter-dam"!)
His wife many years, had implored of this man
To omit all those left-handed prayers
From orations delivered whenever he ran
In the dark, against footstools or chairs.

It grieved her good heart, for she thought it a sin
As well as degrading and low:
So by all proper means she endeavored to win
And keep him in ways he should go.
To Epworth, and prayer meeting, any good place
Where "Amsterdams" never should come,
She quietly led him, that contact with grace
Might work an improvement at home.

'Tis well known that such meetings of every kind
Gather tribute from all who will give
For the purpose of opening eyes of the blind,
And to teach other folks how to live.
They consecrate money, and effort, and life
To "sending the gospel away";—
(And sometimes it happened this man and his wife
Saw them "sending it" day after day!)

At a Young People's Meeting, one sister arose
And exclaimed "For our Savior and King
We are asked for ten dollars! I do not suppose
We are doing ONE—SINGLE BLAMED THING!"

Had you seen the scared look on that heathen man's face!
And the gloom, on the brow of his wife!
That a lady could swear so! And in such a place!—
(Let us hope it reformed him for life.)

1906

G. A. R. LIMERICKS.

Our Comrade The Reverend Titsworth
Says "a pension costs far more than it's worth".
His soul must be vex't by selecting a text
And preaching salvation "two bits worth!"

A Comrade with patriotism
Is unable to feel rheumatism.
And even to mention the matter of "pension"
Is a scandalous Grand Army Schism!

1904

SPORT.

Just now I spied a flock of geese
As southward they were flying.
Reminding me of boyhood days
When I was always trying
To get a shot at anything
That came my way upon the wing.

The fowling piece, and rifle too
Stood always handy by.
Although I scarcely hoped to kill
I would up and "let her fly".
Oh! In those days 'twas royal fun
To tramp about with dog and gun!

* * *

I climbed on board a railroad car
One bleak November day;—
Went hunting after larger game
In a somewhat larger way.
(The hunters were freighted on boxes and flats
In the days I went hunting for Democrats!)

For I hunted them not as Bryan would hunt
Nor Cleveland nor yet like Hearst.
I was trying to kill those Democrats,
(If they did not kill me first.)
Most horribly brutal it now appears.
Yet I followed the pastime several years.

Such tramping about, from year unto year
With haversack, blanket and gun
Is not the picnic it seems to appear
To sportsmen who kill just for fun,—
Though it adds some zest to one's bloody thirst
To know that his quarry may kill him first!

With guns and powder, beer and rum, licentiousness and "trade"—
An open door is all we ask: a fortune soon is made.
Alas! Alas! Poor heathen prince! How vain is your "appeal
To conscience of all Christendom"! 'Tis something quite unreal!

Veneered we are, with decency, which makes our sins more rank.
We serve all heathen childlike men, as "Cassie" served a bank.
In vice and sin you'll soon be sunk, like our enlightened races.
We'll pick your pockets, while you're drunk, with sanctimonious
faces.

We'll sell you bibles, beer and rum, a telephone or clock.
But CONSCIENCES, are out of date: we haven't them in stock!
In vain are such appeals, dear prince; they never bring relief.
You'll have to "take your medicine," like Lo the Indian chief.

1905

HEATHEN? OR CHRISTIAN?

There lived a man, whose quiet deeds of love,
Of charity, and neighborly good will
Employed his waking hours. Yet was he not
A weakling on the world's great battlefield
Where vice, intemperance and bestial sin
Assail our country's youth. But ever he
By calm persuasion, and by logic clear,
Endeavored to lead men to Godly ways.
He died. A little circle of his friends, will keep his
memory green. Another man,
Ambitious, daring, and to rashness brave:
Because to conquer worlds, and legions lead,
Was not to him vouchsafed, he must perforce
Make war in other fashion 'gainst mankind.

(A robber he, with hand against all men.)
And in this form he died.

His mad exploits
Are read by young and old! And captain Kidd,
Dick Turpin, Jesse James, La Fitte, and Rhodes
Are characters historic evermore!

* * *

Some Islanders for centuries had lived
Protected by the seas from war's alarms.
Were far advanced in all the peaceful arts.
Their poets sang, their sculptors wrought and carved,
Their painters made the living canvas speak!
The calm philosophy their sages taught
Was filled with maxims wise; wherein there lay
The germ of true religion,—still, heathen!
At length came ships from far-off foreign shores
And, finding here a peaceful happy horde
Of honest self-supporting islanders,—
By art, cajolery, and by force of arms
Compelled exchanges: (commerce called)—
And intercourse with all the outside world.—
Now, since those erstwhile peaceful heretics
Are shedding blood, and slaying fellow men
We call them “civilized”! Yea even more!
Some say “They’re almost Christian people” too!
Enthusiasts declare—“The reign of peace,
The cause of Christ, is making rapid strides!”
What do they mean? I’m sure I cannot tell.
And what are we? Oh! CHRISTIANS, every one!

COMITY OF NATIONS.

You doubtless know how Justice Phelps insulted England lately?
(Forgetting that the lion's whelps as "scribes" are very stately.)
An "auto scorcher" broke the law and acted somewhat cranky.
His honor failed the line to draw, between John Bull and Yankee.

He dealt out justice, good and hard, to Secretary Gurney,
Who paid his fine, and left his card, pursuing then his journey.
But Justice Phelps, right sudden found that members of legations
Defy the law, on foreign ground! That's comity of nations!

If Justice Phelps had kept in line, deliberated gravely;
Had not at once imposed the fine and dealt out justice bravely:
Perhaps he'd reach the Supreme Bench or Senate of our nation.
But having raised so great a stench for him there's no salvation.

This lesson we should bear in mind. The members of legations
Have left their MANHOOD all behind, they are simply "foreign
nations"

And should they kill, or maim, or shoot, consider with solemnity;
No law, no cane, no gun, no boot! but merely an indemnity!

Let your complaint at once be sent (wrapped up in tape and
flannels)

To our puissant president! (Of course through proper channels;)
Then after lots of pretty talk with hy-phen-a-ted phrases
The culprit has to take a walk among the wilted daisies.

Good magistrates! Be not too fast; what though we're all on
nettles?

Some old decision of the past each present question settles.
Or should we need him, in a pinch when things are too distressing
We'll seek the court of old Judge Lynch to settle matters pressing.

But you must not decide too quick! Remember the condition.
Those great "immunes" are now so thick you are in a bad
position.

When e'er you send a tramp to jail for extra bug-juice-ol-ogy,
To make things safe, pray do not fail to forward an "apology!"

AN INCIDENT.

There lived a man, in other land and days,
Whose destiny untoward ills beset.
In youth he labored, and in many ways
Contrived to lull ambition, and himself forget
For other's sake. And while he dived, and waited,
Behold; "The other's" ships came in full freighted!

And he rejoiced to see their snowy sails,
And envied not, nor heaved one useless sigh.
His course of life was fixed; ambition fails,
With youthful hopes, and aspirations high;
And he still plodded on in modest avocation,
Nor sighed for wealth, for glory, or for lofty station.

Perchance some fleeting thoughts of youthful dreams
Would cross his mind, while musing on the past.
But soon dismissed those evanescent gleams
Of vanished sunshine,—rainbows of the past;
For his had been a school wherein all find
That he who will, may grind, and grind, and grind!

Came past "the other", sailing high on fortune's tide,
And hailed the toiler in his humble sphere.
"What! Ho! My friend! The world is very wide:
'Tis strange that thou art ever plodding here!
Arouse thyself! Why hast thou slept so long?
Up and be doing! Join the passing throng!"

And though his sky was dark enough before,
His fortunes low, his future in eclipse;—
The taunting words an added poignance bore
From memory of days when those same lips
Had murmured softly "Do not leave me, brother!
You know I love you better than all other!"

Mayhap 'twas well that so the die was cast,
That all his youthful hopes were crucified:—
For oft successful life, will at the last,
Bring disappointment, and woes multiplied:—
But when those unjust taunts assailed his ears
He who could welcome death,—shed bitter, bitter tears!

1903

IF.

If I were a boy with a chance in the world
To do, and to dare, and succeed,—
I'd not fill my system with whiskies, or malt,
Or the vapors of any old weed!
When you see other fellows, quite gone to the bad,
And condemn them for acting the fool,
Just remember what practice and training they had
In the nicotine—lager beer—school!

If I were a girl, and alone in the world,
I would toil in the fields, or I'd beg
Before I would marry a human cigar—
Or bottle,—or lager-beer keg!
When you see other women whose faces are sad,
Whose husbands are selfish old chumps
Just consider the habits which make people bad!
And the value of old cigar stumps!

If I were a foolish and insolent boor
With respect for no person, or place;—
Like others, I'd probably spit on the floor
And stupidly smoke in your face,
Should I marry a wife who could live upon smoke,
We need have no family jars;
No flour, no sugar, no meat, wood or coke,
Just fine-cut, and beer,—and cigars!

1904

THE PITY OF IT.

Today I met a friend. A total wreck!
A pipe, a bottle, and a deck of cards
The only things that seem to him worth while.
And he was once a clean-faced manly boy,
With self-respect, and aspirations high,
And noble impulse. Intellectual strength
Of no mean quality. His mother's pride,
His father's hope, the friend of all he met.
And now! An Ishmaelite, a wanderer
With only memories of follies past
And certainty of folly yet to come,
To fill his waking hours with vain regret!
And how has he thus fallen? Woman's hand
That urged the social glass, first broke the way.
The smoker, club, and bar-room! Later on
Saloons and brothels, gambling hells of course,
And all the other fields where young men go
To sow wild oats, by him were cultivated.

* * *

I did not ask him of his worldly wealth
Of money, lands; or whether he possessed
Enough to save him from a pauper's grave;
For, had he Croesus' wealth, or even more
It would not recompense him, for his loss
Of high ideals, of character and self-respect
Thus sacrificed. But, truth to tell, I fear
That even avarice was quenched, by fumes
Of beer, tobacco juice and whiskey slings
With their accessories: so that my friend,
Like many more we see, has given all
And naught received for service of the devil.
Yet, thousands still are hurrying along
To tread the paths of vice, to sow wild oats
Grow prematurely old, to "die while yet they live",
Because they fail to recognize these truths;

That Heaven, and Hell, are all about us here;
That living wholesome lives, is serving God;
That he who thus serves God, has saved himself
And done his best to save his fellow men.
So, like my old time friend they go the way
Which leads to rottenness, and dead men's bones!
Is it not a thousand pities?

December, 1905

A WIRELESS MESSAGE.

Dear Heart of Gold; where'er thou art
For thee today my soul is torn!
Unbidden tears forever start;—
The world seems shabby, old and worn.
I seek the babbling noisy throng
To deaden sense of constant pain.—
Amid the echoes of a song
I hear—"She may not come again!"

I know that all with thee is well,
Sweet peace and rest, are ever thine
Beyond the power of words to tell;—
And yet,—and yet, I still repine.—
I hasten on my daily round
While robins chant a sweet refrain;
But every sight, and every sound
Reminds me, thou'lt not come again!

When evening falls, and stars are bright,
I seem to see thee at the door;
The darkness comes, and morning light,
But thou, dear heart, wilt come no more!
On every side, where'er I go
Each trifle seems to speak thy name.

A book, a flower, or sunset glow
The warning ever seems the same.

But little girl, I waft you this
A message from my inmost soul,
Where'er thou art, is love and bliss
And I am hastening toward that goal.
This wireless message, writ in tears
By him who hears the sad refrain
Forever sounding in his ears—
"She never may return again!"

Sometimes our faith seems almost dead.
Too blind to penetrate the gloom
Which so obscures the fountain head
And all, within "the other room."
But this I know, dear Heart of Gold,
This world is blest by such as thee;
And though all faith were dead and cold,
Where'er thou art, there would I be!

July 28, 1907

ENVIRONMENT.

I knew a plant from southern clime
Which lived, and grew, 'mid frost and cold.
Its leaves endured the chilling rime,
The roots still sought a firmer hold;
And yet no blossoms would appear
Though it survived from year to year.

I said "Poor thing! I sympathize,
For both of us seem out of place.
You long for sun and balmy skies,
Your southern origin I trace.
While I? Well—on some other sphere
I might be good?—But we are here!"

1903



THE CAT DOTH PLAY AND AFTER SLAY.

But recently a tragedy occurred
Before my very eyes. A life was quenched.
The vital spark went out in endless night.
A spirit lost its own identity,
Became once more a portion of the whole
Unmeasureable, unfathomable, illimitable sea of vital force.

A tiny mouse had wandered forth for food,
And pussy, likewise seeking daily bread,
With sudden spring caught him beneath her paw.
Then, carefully conveyed him to the place of sacrifice,
There to pursue with feline strategy
The savage torture of her helpless prey,
His efforts to escape, his helplessness,
The agony of blasted hopes, the pain
Of disappointment. Now and then a gleam
Of joyful hope, followed by blank despair.
Just when he nearly reached his goal
Those velvet paws would seize him once again,
Convey him as before to open ground
And drop him there.

As if to say

“The world is all before you, mousie dear!
Go forth, be happy, see now, you are free
To choose your course, to stay or go.” And he,

Being a free-will mouse, or seeming one,
Would make another dash for liberty,
As though he thought the struggle and the pain
Were tender mercies dealt out for his good.

Whatever was the sentiment aroused
In mousie's brain, I could not fail to see
The parallel between his plight and mine.
For, whether it be fate or providence
In whom I trust; or whether I believe
This thing or that; whether I pray or mock,
Whatever I may do or think or say,
Imagine or conceive, "the destiny
That shapes our ends" is grinding on for aye!
Let it be all in kindness meant, the will
Of God who doeth all things well, or fate,
Relentless, unseen, inexorable,
That leads us on or holds us back, whate'er
Encourages or thwarts man's dearest hopes,
Sooner or later must the curtain fall,
The vise-like jaws close fast,—the finish come.

* * *

Therefore I wonder if my brother mouse
Believes the cat is well disposed toward him?
'Twould surely reconcile him to his fate
And comfort him immensely could he feel
That every buffet from his feline fate
Is blessing in disguise, howe'er it hurts!

But while I ruminate the tragedy occurs:
The mouse is not!—

The universe is moved

As by a sparrow's fall; and I plod on
Such time as,—something, may permit;
Then, like that other atom, be absorbed.
Meantime, 'tis quite consoling just to think
That all is well if only we believe.

Oct. 10, 1906

STUDENTS IN OTHER LANDS.

(Suggested by the cover of a five-cent tablet.)

Upon my tablet cover, there appears
A priest of Burmah with his class of boys;
Also a printed slip, a short account
Of Buddhist monks who teach the Burmese youth,
The faith of Buddha. His philosophy,
The way to everlasting progress here
Is mainly taught by them. The rudiments
Of branches we consider the mainstay
Suffice for those whose aim is perfect life.
Surely I see a wondrous harmony
In this with Him who gave the golden rule,
And strange to say, the simple Burmese priest
Is clothed like John the Baptist. Round his loins,
A girdle holds his robe in place,—a bowl
Wherein the faithful throw their offerings,
An axe, a fan, needle and water cup,
And nothing more! Oh, let us all arise
And throw our dimes and dollars in a pool
To send salvation to those simple souls
Who live so like the man of Galilee.
While we, through Christian ethics, have advanced,
Built monuments to Mammon, Moloch, Baal,
Bacchus, Gambrinus and our other gods,
Those simple folk are still so densely dark.
They have no pockets in their pantaloons!
No aspiration to be millionaires
And give to foreign missions one per cent.
They merely try to make the life on earth
As useful and as perfect as may be.
Alas, poor souls! They do not seem to grasp
The meaning of the sermon on the mount!
To us is given the true and only light
Which leads to fortune and to bank accounts;
To higher ideals, higher salaries;

Big book concerns, and missionaries!
When we have overcome the Christian's drink,
Cast out the beams that blind our Christian eyes
Then may we see, perchance, those Buddhist monks
Are true disciples of the prince of peace.

1905

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

O let us be merry, and sing the glad song!
For merriment keeps us from ways that are wrong.
The man of sad countenance leaneth toward guilt
(Let us crack a few chestnuts, to show how we're built!)
Last month we were thankful; for cash in the banks,
And for bankers, who spend it in riotous pranks:
For franchises, telephones, trolleys, and trusts,
(For each bubble that floats till it finally "busts".)

And now when our evenings are growing so long
That work time is short, it is time for a song.
A Te Deum Laudamus! Hip! Hip! Hoo-ray
For a man who so kindly turned night into day!
Our ancestors used an old candle at night
Till John D. arose and said "Let there be light"
(For The Lord did not know all the stores in His cellar
Until after the advent of John Rockefeller!)

John saw how the people abhor competition—
He gave them a "re-bate," which changed the condition.
(Had John been a Chinaman, Hindu, or Turk
He would not have known how to make the thing work)
Merry Christmas reminds us of all that we owe,—
(In the way of salvation from darkness and woe.)
To the christianized nations; that love one another
So much that they mangle and murder their "brother".

Just look at us now! With the largest of guns
And warships (with "burthen" of millions of tons)!—
The largest embezzlers the world ever knew
And Shylocks who discount that historic Jew.
Distilleries, breweries, dives and saloons;
With drugs to make Christians as crazy as loons
And all kinds of devilment ever contrived!—
But, "Joy to the world" for The Lord has arrived!

Mohammedans never can reach our condition:
Those pagan teetotalers have prohibition!—
Our civilization is certainly "It"!
(If you hint otherwise, you may give us a fit.)
Be merry! Teach heathen men how to get "tight";
To gamble, to traffic, to read and to fight,
Since we are "enlightened" now let us SHED light!
Above all, be merry! 'Tis Christmas! Good night.

1906

WATCH MEETING REFLECTIONS.

(December 31, 1906, 11:30 P. M.)

The calendar states that the present year
Expires some minutes past eleven.—
Father Time (like the stork) is hovering near
To usher in "Nineteen—ought—seven."
Such events have transpired so often before
This scarcely produces a ripple
In circles where parties have laid in their store
Of postage stamps, hard coal and tippie.

Tonight, as I stir up the genial coke
A remarkable change I can see
Since the nights when I sat by the camp fire smoke
In the winter of "sixty-three"!

* * *

Vermont pine stumps, and maple logs
Wisconsin green burr-oak,

Hard coal or soft, the peat from the bogs
Dry buffalo-chips, or coke;—
Kerosene, gasoline, alcohol too,
Natural gas, and hay,—
(In a pinch either one of these will do
On a blustering winter's day.)
But green wood SMOKE is a cold, damp, thing.
(As vile as a pipe, or cigar),
And nobody sits by the smoke to,—sing!
(Except in the time of war.)

* * *

(11:50 P. M.)

A few more ticks of the clock, "and then"?
Why! Some people's rent will be due.
Some one may write with a pencil, or pen,
"A Happy New Year to you!"
We shall see that the moon in its orbit revolves,
That the sun remains in heaven:
That many will register high resolves
In nineteen hundred and seven.

Many now living, will die of course;
Some who are single will marry;
Several women will ask for divorce
From husbands who raise the "Old Harry".
And days will go by, and months, and years
Till the earth shall pass away!
Then what of our puny hopes and fears
Where millions of years are one day?

We may manfully serve our allotted time
Or regard our whole life as a joke.
But nothing can be very warm or sublime
In a character warmed up by smoke!

* * *

Ah! The hour has struck! The year is dead!
And nineteen-seven is here!
Out with the lights, boys! Off to bed,
The same as we did last year!

WHERE ARE YOU?

The government rests on its statutes.
 (These are human, and not without flaw)
But the "anarchist" thinks his opinions
 Should supersede gospel, and law.
The patriot yields to law's mandate.
 The anarchist rails and defies.
True freemen respect law and order,
 Which anarchists hate and despise.

When the bomb throwing anarchist rises
 And curses our flag on the street.
Declares all our laws are oppressive,
 All government merely a cheat;
It is time for each patriot freeman
 To calmly consider this "quiz," —
"How much have I done in my life time
 To make this man just what he is?"

If the anarchist occupies office,
 And as governor, sheriff or judge
By neglect, or by "graft," or corruption
 Produces a bad sort of smudge
It is well for each partisan voter
 To searchingly ask of himself
"How much have I done by my ballot
 To lay all such men on the shelf?"

Should a rogue, or a blind pig promoter
 Be caught in the net of the law
Do we instantly wish we could help him
 By finding some error or flaw?
Do we favor upholding our statutes?
 Are we standing for right, or for wrong?
If we honestly answer these questions
 We'll discover just where we belong!

Do we cavil, and sneer, and speak lightly
Of efforts to benefit man?
Do we criticise all kinds of methods
And hinder them all that we can?
Do we hamper the efforts of others
To clean up the sink holes of sin?
We cannot deceive other people,—
'Tis the "anarchist class" we are in!

All our wriggling, and squirming, and twisting
Protesting, explaining "just why,"
Merely makes inconsistency glaring:—
(And it causes us sometimes to lie);
When the laws are unrighteous, repeal them.
But obey every one they may pass!
If we cannot keep inside the traces
We belong in the anarchist class!

1906

MY 1908 VALENTINE.

St. Valentine! St. Valentine! How many times have we
Sent warm requests for ladies fair to "please remember me?"
In days long past, to half a score we'd send a Valentine.
(And each and every one was asked if she would not be mine!)

Thy spirit moveth me to write,—(not in facetious vein)
But gravely, as becometh me, a message clear and plain.
Take it, good Saint, and thus proclaim to every soul on earth,
My Valentine, must be the one of character, and worth!

Whatever she may lack in grace,—accomplishments, or looks,—
Advantages in social ways, or learning gained from books;—
EACH, maiden young, or matron old, whose virtues clearly shine
In sturdy christian character, is now, "my Valentine!"

DOGS.

(One of Æsop's Fables in rhyme.)

A dog, whose daily walking had set everybody talking,
And demanding that he be restrained, because he cut up bad;
Declared his pranks were regal; quite civilized and legal.
In fact the very manners that some dogs have ever had!
So, he continued acting in a manner quite distracting
While silly dogs both great and small, would follow in his track
And they made themselves quite jolly in their foolish canine folly
While every pup would do his best to imitate "Old Jack".

In his eyes would then appear, such a crafty stupid leer
Each time he saw a puppy, cutting up some foolish trick.
Though he never cared to stay, but would scamper right away
If he saw a man or woman, just reaching for a stick!
Once a puppy bit a child. Then the people all were wild!
If a dog came lolling up the street, they'd cry out "He is mad!"
And they called no judge or jury, but they slew them in their fury
And having cleared the place of dogs, the people all were glad.
Now close at home abiding, Old Jack was safely hiding
Until someone suggested "Jack was always with the gang!"
"And why should they bite babies, if they haven't germs of rabies?"
So Jack was straightway sentenced, to either drown or hang.
The moral of this fable you'll perceive (if you are able)
That sometimes retribution overtakes the wisest dogs.
Another sad reflection will occur in this connection,
That dogs were dogs, in Æsop's time, and hogs were always hogs.

“PERVERSITY OF INANIMATE THINGS.”

Of all the crosses we must bear along our thorny path,
Inanimate, insensate things, do most provoke our wrath.
‘Tis quite remarkable, to see their horrible PER-VER-SI-TEE!

A penny dropped upon the earth, is sure to find a crack;
An automobile always tries to bolt the beaten track.
A needle? Seek it where you may, —’tis hiding in a mow of hay!

His drill or binder, fails to work. He’ll tinker, sweat and pound
To get one pesky burr to turn, or twist a bolt around;
Then, all at once, a chip will fly and hit the farmer in his eye!

Perverse we find whate’er we use, of earth, of sea, of air.
Where things should never, never hide, we always find them there.
Nothing in proper place will stay:—’tis sure to go some other way!

And years of rough experience, prove naught is more perverse
Than printer’s type. It bucks, and kicks, and acts so “very worse”
That correspondents tear their hair,—the readers groan and writ-
ers swear.

Compositors are animate (at least supposed to be,)
And those who read the proof, are quick a lack of sense to see.
But all their vigilance is vain: those wicked types still give us pain!

And so it goes; and ever will, till that millennial day
When all perverse, insensate things, shall melt and pass away!
Oh! Would that I might live to see the end of all “perversitee!”

WISCONSIN POLITICS 1904.

"The hens are all saying 'Cook! Cook!'

And not a Bob White is heard in Wisconsin."—News item.

A Stalwart was riding along the highway
As the sun was just sinking at close of the day.
From the trees on his right hand he heard someone say,

"Bob's

All

Right!"

He clucked to his horses and gave them the lash—
His temper impelled him to do something rash;
But a second voice answered as quick as a flash
"Bob's Right! Bob's Right! Bob's—All—Right!"

He soon had his trotters both making a run
For his full-blooded dog, and his breech-loading gun,
To slay the poor birdies that whistled for fun—
"Bob's—All—Right!"

The sound of his gun at the close of day
Attracted a game warden walking that way,
The judge said next morning,
"There's fifty to pay."

Yes. Bob's All Right, and there are lots of quails to
say so. (Thanks to the game wardens.)

July

"GOD GIVE US MEN."

(Dr. Holland in 1856.)

There's a hot time coming at the Gym.
And the partizans are training for the fray.
The delegates are full of life and vim,
They're expecting trouble on convention day;—
Which reminds me of something I'll never forget.
(Those arms! And those legs! They are haunting me yet!)

In the fifties we had partizans like these,
The democrats and whigs were badly split.
It was "free-for-all, and go it as you please,"
Each feeling very sure that he was it!
While country and principle had to stand back
There was turmoil, disorder, and party whip's crack.

The spirit thus engendered led to war.
With the love of country wholly cast aside
The partizans were arming near and far
While cooler heads essayed to stay the tide:
And so it fell out that on southern farms
We buried some carloads of legs, and arms!

The bacillus germ is active as of yore—
The partizan is rampant, full of fight.
With weighty questions knocking at the door
Demanding that we settle them aright,
Can patriots stoop, for a brief success,
To methods resulting, how? (No one can guess.)

When repairing to the confines of the Gym
May each delegate remember he's a man;
An American! The world demands of him
To do the very utmost that he can
For manhood, for country, for justice and right
As conscience directs him, and God gives him light.

But Alas! Whate'er we do or say
The "bacillus particus" is active yet.
And is liable to swarm convention day
(As in those other days I can't forget,
When personal rancor, and obstinate will
Brought Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Champion's Hill!)

May 16, 1904. Anniversary of battle of Champion Hills, May 16, 1863.

RAID OF THE STALWARTS.

The stalwarts came down like a herd of wild steers
With "harmony" lances, and partizan spears.
With pleas that were threats, and effrontery bold
They repeated the stories their organs have told.

They had juggled the figures, and influenced papers
To publish their fibs about Bob, and his capers
Joined hands with the railroads, defended rebate
Said Bob would drive capital out of the state.
Hustled the voters from caucus to caucus
And boasted such methods would certainly knock us.

At 8 they rehearsed their great harmony play,
(Which meant "we'll be good if we have our own way!")
They marched to the Gym, like Sennecharib's host
To make things harmonious regardless of cost!—
As the cornsheller strippeth the corn from the cob
The stalwarts were scattered and beaten by Bob!—

And Jeffries from Janesville is loud in his wail,
When objection, and protest, and arguments fail.
For "Bob, found that wrench" and he gave it a twist,
And the icewater came at one turn of his wrist.
Their fire was quenched in the midst of their boast,
And it shriveled them up like a midsummer frost.
Now all that is left of that Stalwart affair
Is "Appeal to the Courts" and some liquified air!

May 25, 1904.

NATIONAL POLITICS IN 1904.

(A Dialogue.)

(MIKE)

“Say Pat! Phat has mister Hearst done
That makes all thim iditors kick?
They say he’s a son-of-a-gun
And his doin’s has made them all sick.
Has he robbed Uncle Sam? Or forged ary paper?
Or grafted, or burgled, or ary sich caper?”

(PAT)

“Will Moike, the young feller has cash,
And his Joornals is yellow they say.
He has given thim many a slash
In a very dis-coort-eous way.
And I’m towld that he says he is willing and ready,
To put up the stakes for a match against Teddy.”

(MIKE)

“Phat for should they howl about that?
Sure they needs lots of foonds in campaigns!
If the candidate foornishes fat
Just see phat the rist of them gains!
If that’s all the ail of him, sure he’s no sinner!
And it looks very loikely he’d turn out a winner!”

(PAT)

“No Moike. The pre-ceed-ints demand
That a prisident’s purse should be slim,
So that fellers with wads in aich hand
Kin have aisy acciss to him!
Now Hearst with his goold, and papers that’s yellow
MOIGHT WORK THE CONVINTION, FOR SOME OTHER FELLOW!”

BREAD AND BUTTER.

Somewhere I have read about "leaners,"
And "toilers" who mount to the skies.
Of diligent reapers and gleaners,
How genius is certain to rise:
But most of the people who flourish
Their fame or success in your face
Required some solids, to nourish
And fit them for running their race!

All about us behold fellow creatures
Who have laid their ambitions aside
And with resolute, sternly set features
Are drifting along with the tide.
For the great, and the wise of tomorrow,
Today must have butter and bread.
So, they labor, they toil, and they sorrow,
And embryo genius, is fed!

The mothers, the fathers, the brothers
Who abandoned their cherished designs,
While toiling and planning for others,
Accepting the lot God assigns,
Should receive at least, some commendation,
For furnishing butter and bread
To the great and the wise of the nation,
Who otherwise might have been dead.

Do you wonder their temper grows sour?
The manner repellant and cold?
We should bless them each day and each hour
Those toilers with hearts of pure gold!
Remembrance, to them may bring sorrow,
But seldom a plaint do they utter.
For statesmen, and bards of tomorrow
Must not be denied bread and butter!

So they crucify selfish ambition
And bend to their task, day by day.
God grant it may bring them fruition,
Their labor be not thrown away!—
You may shout for the great, the heroic,
Or go wild o'er the utterly utter.
My laurel leaf, goes to the stoic
Who toils, to provide bread and butter!

1905.

ALLEGORY ON GRAFTING.

A grafter with wax and with knife
Went forth an old orchard to graft
And he boastingly said to his wife
As he seized his good saw by the haft,
“I will show you an orchard that no one can beat
With fruit that is luscious, and wholesome to eat.”

Then he sawed off a limb, or a twig
In a manner no expert would dare.
The scions, some small and some big,
Were inserted with speed and with care.
But all were from trees of inferior stock
With fruit very tasteless, or hard as a rock.

The orchard is standing today
And a curious sight to behold!
Limbs sprawling about every way,
And the apples are bitter I'm told,
While many a branch on his trees may be found
Low drooping, and always inclined toward the ground!

* * *

Reformers go forth to convert
With arguments, figures and tracts.

They are vigilant, active, alert;
While grafting our minds with their facts
They may sever the branch of our present belief,
And substitute traits of a Comanche Chief!

Evangelists prune off our pride
And graft in humility's twigs.
Thenceforward, whatever betide
We refrain from hilarious jigs:
But devote our whole life to acquiring wealth.
By hooking, by crooking, by fair means or stealth!

Take heed all ye grafters I pray
And leave the old trees to their fate.
Old men are not changed in a day;
Old customs are hard to abate.
Never waste any time on a wicked old coot.
In reforms as in grafting, "begin at the root."

1905.

MORAL SUASION.

I know a lot of noisy active lads

Well posted on athletics, "you just bet!"
They live upon the labor of their dads.

Not one bit of help their mothers ever get.
They will wrangle over ball games by the hour,

Declaring "Dinkey Doodle was to blame!"
While dad is lugging home a sack of flour
To feed them up against another game.

You see quite often, girls as tall as "ma"

Behaving very rudely on the street.
They romp, and screech, and shout a loud ha! ha!
Or push, and jostle, fellows whom they meet.

Those girls may sometime shed some bitter tears
When foolish actions, bring a tarnished name!
It takes about two hundred thousand years
To restore, the luster of a lady's fame!

The men and women you and I have met
Will likely be the same another year.
And results of the example we may set
Is all the danger we should really fear.—
Yet after all, I cannot help considering,—
If we, had acted like those boys and girls
Our parents wouldn't do a single thing
But treat us to some fancy curves and twirls!

And if I had a big athletic kid
Who "practiced" all the spring and all the fall;
Who never heeded what his mother bid,
I'd seize a bat, and teach him to play "bawl"!

And if your girl, behaved like those we see,—
Of course—I would not say—that—you should whip her:—
But really now, between yourself and me,
How would it do, to—just—remove your slipper?

1905

FARVAL TO KIRK (NORSK NIGHTINGALE).

Farval Norski. Yu ban starting into werry sinful place!
Nightingale must go like saxty, if he try to keep the pace!
An' Ay bat you find tan dollar ban so small as poker chip,
Af yu follow avery faller who skol givin' yu nice tip!
"Vild oats" costin' lots of panga, in Milwaukee or New Jork!
Faller naver ban in trouble van he tendin' right to vork!
Farval! Vonce again Ay say dis!(Yust like Byron, yust like Kirk!)
Try tu make dis New Jork better. (Norski fallers naver shirk.)
Farval! All dose "yentle readers," vishing Norski poet val.—
(Hopin', ven he leave Milwaukee, he not goin' nearer "hal"!

1905

INSPIRATION.

When Adam first became a living soul
God moved upon the face of waters deep
And permeated all the utmost ends
Of boundless space.

His laws inerrant, still
Pervade the realms unseen, as far beyond
The vain imaginings of puny man
As infinite and endless time itself.

Creation still proceeds. Always the new
Must take the place of older, cruder, forms.—
(They much mistake Omnipotence, who hold
The slow but constant growth of redwood tree
Less a creation, less a work of God,
Because not suddenly and swiftly wrought).—

And, evermore God's messages, are borne
In widening waves through endless space
To all receptive souls!

But not to each
Seems given the eye to see, the ear to hear,
Or sense to comprehend omnipotent discourse.—

As, when the message sent from mountain top
Across the seas to other lands, must find
An instrument attuned in harmony
Which vibrates perfectly, and thus repeats
Each syllable and word in accents plain;—

(Else merely noise devoid of sense is heard
Or silence broods, unbroken as before);—

So must the messages He sends to men
Find souls attuned in harmony with God
Else broken fragments, meaningless grotesque,
Barbaric travesties, discordant noise,
Is all that we shall hear.

Wherefore, O man
Look well to thy receiver!—

Cares of life

Or pleasure's quest, ambition's wild pursuit,
May dull thy sense for more than flagrant sin!—

E'en as the spider's filmy gauze, sometimes
Will serve to interrupt the lightning's course,
So these vain things may turn aside His word!—

And though God's message reach thy worldly soul,
The sheet whereon 'tis then transcribed may be
So blurred and blotched, with all thine old accounts
That none can read aright, or understand!—

God speaks to all mankind the self-same words!
But, each and every soul construes, or reads,
According to his kind. — Old Massasoit, —
(That savage, aboriginal "Samaritan,") —
Our own New England pilgrim ancestors,
The Arab, Hottentot, and Egypt's kings
All, all have heard His voice; and each believed,
(Like Saul of Tarsus), that he did God's will. —

Inspired prophets, when they hear His voice
Or read the scrolls whereon His words appear. —
They, too, see only part of truth, or hear
At best a murmur now and then! Always
The blindness of heredity obscures their sight,
The page is blurred in places, where the past
Has graven many things they hold as truth!

Their fervid souls while wrapped in mortal clay
May catch some faintest sound when God doth speak,
And they may strive to spread abroad the truth:—
But ever comes amid their sweetest tones
The discord of the very human voice!

Wherefore I say again, O child of man
Look well to thy receptive faculties!

God speaks to thee each day in still small voice:
And if thou hearest not His message, then
Attune thy soul in harmony with Him!—

If thy poor eyes behold not everywhere
Intelligent, omnipotent design,
'Tis not because the message is not plain:—

Thy spirit is affected with opthalmia!
And if thou dost not feel a warmer glow,
A touch of inspiration from on high
When e'er at eve the starry dome is bright,
Or sunrise greets thine eyes at early dawn,—
If nature's wonders fail to rouse thy soul,—
Because so oft such miracles are wrought,—
Then were it useless quite for God to come!
Once having seen His face, that too, would fail
To waken lofty sentiment within thy breast.—

* * *

But having heard the voice, or read the words
If aught appears, save "Love the Lord thy God
With all thy heart, and mind, and strength;
Thy neighbor as thyself,"—the wires are crossed!—

The other portion is a message sent
From hades,—dead man's land,—the gloomy past
Where only might makes right. And whoso fails
To take his science or theology
From self appointed ministers of God
Is made to feel their wrath.

Heredity

Inclines us all to read between the lines
"Compel thy neighbor, also to love God"!—
Beware the sin of bigoted intolerance!—

Another's soul may be as pure as thine;
Another's ear may hear as well God's words:
Another's voice proclaim a message true,
Although it be no message thou hast heard!

Think not thou art infallible.

Perchance

Tomorrow, when the scales shall fall, thine eyes
May see more clearly than today they see,
Thy soul, released from cobwebs of the past,
May hear the message as thy neighbor hears.

Who knows?

“MERELY A PRIVATE.”

(Suggested by recent “reminiscences of the civil war”.)

Private Tom Clarkson of Company “G”,
Was not of a type you would commonly see.
He was short, he was narrow, and homely, and lean,
His age—well—of course “the required eighteen.”
Stood five feet four inches, and just tipped the beam
At one hundred pounds,—Now this is no dream
That I am relating; but true, every word.
(I can prove it by men who once carried a sword!)—
And Tom, was an orphan; with no one to cry
Or mourn very much if he happened to die.
He was English by birth, and of plebeian stock.
(Not at all like the Pilgrims of Old Plymouth Rock.)
He was careless, untidy, and so the poor scamp
Had all kinds of trouble, while we were in camp,
But when we were marching! Ah! Tom was the lad
Who was foraging round to find what might be had.
His messmates were seldom without something good;
He found sweet potatoes,—he hunted up wood,
And chickens, and pigs, and all things worth hooking,
(But that was the limit. He would not do the cooking!)

Did a six foot companion begin to play out
Tom, carried his knapsack or gun, turn about.
While big fellows wilted and begged for a ride,
This small chap was foraging somewhere outside.
Was a man called for picket, too worn, or too sick,
Tom Clarkson would offer to stand out his trick.
In skirmish or battle the crack of his gun
Was heard the most frequent,—he thought it great fun.
From this brief account, you will readily see
Why Tom was well thought of in Company “G”.

* * *

But one April day, in a grove of pine wood
We saw the poor fellow was spitting up blood!

His lungs had been pierced by a large rifle ball
 And all of us felt he had no chance at all.
 "They,"—captured our ambulance, turned both our flanks
 "And most of us WENT BACK, on General Banks!"
 But Tom went to Texas,—was placed in a pen,
 And fed upon corn with the rest of our men.

* * *

You ask if he died there? Why "not on your life!"
 He served till the war closed. Came home: took a wife:—
 For peace, hath her victories no less than war:
 And here private Clarkson stands much above par!
 He well might be proud of the record he made,
 Though not ornamental when on dress parade.—
 And it seems that since marriage both he and his bride
 Have constantly fought against "race suicide".
 A comrade has told me, that some years ago
 They had ten or twelve children: "a regular row"!
 Pretty fair for a private, who served in the ranks,
 And Congress should give him—a large vote of thanks!
 To one thing however I'd call your attention;
 Tom's "pedigree" scarcely deserves any mention!
 Another suggestion too,—while I am writing,—
 The MEN WITH THE SHOULDER-STRAPS

"Did—

All—

The—

Fighting!"

1905

NATE AND THE PARSON.

Whenever I'm in meetin' an' parson takes his text
 Where Paul sends out a greetin', ter this one, and that and the next
 I feel a sort of creepiness, run up and down my back
 An' I never have no sleepiness! I just wait for his attack.
 (The parson dosen't mention me; of course that isn't best.
 He'll "tech the button," don't ye see, an my neighbors do the rest.)
 I know when he's intendin' to hit us right and left
 An' of all the shots he's sendin, I mostly git the heft!

Fer all the rest keeps sayin "That sermon's meant for Nate"! Or "Nate better start a prayin, afore it gits too late"; An' sich like kinds of chaffin' that riles me up a bit (Though I allers keep on laffin, er else they'd never quit)! — No.—I couldn't think of sleepin' after parson takes his text. Cos I feel the chills a creepin', an' I know what's comin next. When he reads about some sayin's of Peter, or St. Paul, There's goin ter be a flayin, and Nate must take it all. Folks act as if this preachin' jist all belongs to me.— An' where they'll get their teachin' it is mighty hard to see. They're most uncommon generous, but they reely haint no ground Cos parson preaches "strenerous,"—an' there's plenty to go round. So none of us gits sleepy when our parson takes his stand! He can preach till we feel creepy,—An' pray,—to beat the band! An' even when he hints at me, an' looks so mazin' firm, It helps a feller lots, to see how bad some others squirm!

1906.

THE PATRIOT'S DUTY.

I have never been converted, and I wabble some on creed;
I haven't much religion, nor a faith like mustard seed:
But I think I know the difference between the right and wrong
And I want to tell you something, and put it mighty strong.

When I watch the people going to the church, and the saloon,
And I think about the conflict that is coming very soon
Between those institutions, which stand for good and evil,
It seems we ought to help the church to fight against the devil!

Some may be superstitious as to miracles "and sich":
Some may forget the golden rule, in their hurry to get rich.
Their words may not display the faith of which they talk so loud;—
But they look, and act, more decent than the boozy lawless crowd.

While churches teach us principles that call the race still higher,
Saloons are simply fitting men to wallow in the mire.
With these two forces face to face,—the wrong against the right,
A minute seems quite time enough to choose where we must fight.

If we cannot join the army, and help to swell the ranks
We can render some assistance if we scout along the flanks.
But while the conflict rages, let each patriot beware!
"If we do not help the hunter, we must not assist the bear"!

1905

64

THE DEVIL.

Who is the devil anyway?
How does he look? Where does he stay?
And does he roam abroad today,
This Devil?

And can we see him? Can we trace
His movements, his abiding place?
Does he exist by God's sweet grace?
Or is he just the Devil?

God made the heavenly choir that sings;
Made man and other perfect things.
But whatsoever trouble brings
Is with great propriety attributed to
The Devil.

You'll find the devil if you look
In crowded street, sequestered nook,
Sometimes the covers of a book
Secrete the Devil.

Wherever evil thought finds birth,
On land or sea, o'er all the earth,
'Mid scenes of woe and scenes of mirth
You'll find the Devil.

He leers at every smiling lass,
He dogs the crowds that swiftly pass.
By glancing in the looking glass
You may possibly see the Devil!

Who teaches boys to chew and swear?
To gamble, smoke, get on a tear,
While parents have the blame to bear?
The Devil and his hired man.

Who is it chuckles and seems glad
When some misguided, foolish lad
Smokes cigarets, and fools his dad?
The dealer in Duke's mixture,
Duke and the Devil.

Who laughs to see a decent boy
His manhood and his health destroy?
Who snares the youth with some decoy?
The Devil,—

(In pants or petticoats, as the case may be, and doing business on commission.)

Ever alert and full of vim;
He follows us with aspect grim,—
'Tis hard to get away from him
For the Devil is in every one of us.

This is the reason why we brand
Atrocious deeds, in any land,
And wickedness on every hand
As the work of the Devil.

1905.

TOGO, OR NOT TO GO!

Said the Japs to the Russians "you promised you know
To withdraw from Korea; and you move somewhat slow!
Perhaps it is well we should help you to go?

With Togo!"

Said the Czar, "Now Mikado, if once you begin,
I'll send lots of Cossacks, and Kuropatkin!
The ocean is near and we'll soon drive you in!
I'll show you we don't have to go!"

(Togo?)

But having been "driving" for more than a year,
It appears that the Czar was beginning to fear
He was losing his grip, on the land of Kórear
And he ordered his Black Sea Fleet to go,

(Togo!)

It seems paradoxical too, don't you know?
They're obliged to move swiftly because they move slow.
And the principal thing which compels them to go,
Is the fact that they do not have to go!

(Togo!)

While the Japs it appears may remain at their ease
On continent, island, or on the high seas,
They can stay in Korea just as long as they please,

Because they have to go! (TOGO!)

"THE YELLOW MAN'S BURDEN."

(With apologies to Rudyard Kipling.)

We must teach all the world how to live!
We must elevate, humanize man,
The boon of enlightenment give,
And henceforward march in the van.
For white men are wicked and given to vice
Because they have never been taught to eat rice.

'Tis a terrible task that is set
For the olive-hued races, I trow!
Such problems must ever be met
Though blood in great rivers shall flow.
If white men are slaughtered it cuts little ice.
They must all be converted and live upon rice.

Our engines of war are unique;
Of death we have no fear at all.
We compare very well in physique;
We are experts with powder and ball.
If the nations of earth shall decline to eat rice,
Annihilate! Sweep them all off in a trice!

'Tis our destiny leads us along.
The love which we bear toward mankind
Impels us to fight against wrong!
All our pleasure in duty we find.
And duty and commerce,—and everything nice
Demands, that we force all the world to eat rice.

For rice is a diet of peace,
It will render them lovely and mild;
Cause all of their clashing to cease,
Make the rudest as meek as a child.
Our destiny calls us! Don't mention the price!
We must conquer the nations;—AND MAKE THEM EAT RICE!

AN EPISTLE TO THE GRECO-ROMANS.

(By a Home Missionary Worker.)

There's a time for joy and gladness; and 'tis good to feel the thrill
Of ecstatic jubilation, like those students on the hill!
But always please remember we are making a mistake
When we estimate our pleasure by the silly noise we make.

Though the team while out for practice, with the others standing
round,
May shout, and scream, and "holler" till they fairly shake the
ground;
At other public places,—if they're gentlemanly boys,—
They will drop the interference, and the tackles, and the noise!

Nearly all enlightened people will respect the house of God.
Athletic sports within its walls, would certainly seem odd!
To stamp and scuffle, scream and yell, is not the "joyful noise"
That we read about in scripture. Think of this, ye girls and boys!

But the timbrel and the sackbut, with some other ancient things
Like the hewgag, and the jewsharp, or the instrument with strings;
Would seem far more harmonious within that sacred place
Than the jeers that greet a batsman when he fails to reach his base!

There may be time for swaggering, for clinches, and for whacks;
A place for rough-and-tumble and for training "quarterbacks";
For saluting an acquaintance with a slap across the face;
But a decent public gathering is not the time nor place.

Now is it?

WHO SHALL BE GREATER?

An aged "beggar woman" died in France
With thousands hidden in a mattress old.
A king of finance also died of late,
"Left sixty millions more or less," we're told.
A pismire likewise that was well to do,
A striped gopher with large stores of grain,—
All these have passed away to the beyond,
Leaving behind the wealth they strove to gain.

Will some one tell, when all is done and said.
What profit hath the gopher or the ant,
The man or woman? Or wherein the world
Is better that they ever lived? I can't.
The woman begged; the financier laid plans
By which his horde increased,— and each pursued
The method suited to his taste and skill.
With miser instinct all alike imbued.

Successful? To be sure they won success.
That is to say, they had laid by
Some surplus suited to their several tastes.
(Great consolation when they came to die!)
But in the spiritland's effulgent glow,
Where shadows of their lives are clear outlined,
I wonder which will make the greater show,
The pismire or some men we have in mind?

“ONE SAW THE MUD; THE OTHER SAW THE STARS.”

(An Allegory)

Two soldiers escaping through prison bars—
The one kept his eyes on the mud.
He cared not for Jupiter, Saturn or Mars;
His mind did not wander away to the stars;
He was hoping to land without jolting or jars,
Or a horrible shocking dull thud!

The other looked up to the heavens above.
And when he had severed the bar,
He caught sight of Venus, (the goddess of love);—
And thinking the value of “ideals” to prove,
He pushed his way through, with a squeeze and a shove,
Still fixing his eyes on that star!

The first safely dropped, in the mud where he aimed.
Then hied him away from the bars.—
The other collapsed, and was frightfully maimed.
(The guards who recaptured him always have claimed
They treated him kindly, and could not be blamed
For his bumping against the stars!)

Now, therefore, I always aver, and maintain,
That mud has a practical use.
If we grasp at a star all our efforts are vain.
We belong on the earth. On this earth we remain.
Since this is our portion why should we complain
Or treat good soft mud with abuse?

1906

BLESSINGS WE ENDURE.

So many mercies God has sent to lift our souls up higher,
That more than half our life is spent before we view things nigher.

The child is blessed with many a cross, the youth with cramped
ambition.

Maturer years yield much of dross and hopes without fruition.

Loved ones depart, to come no more. Warm friends grow cold
and chilly.

One feels that life is quite a bore, (but that of course is silly.)

Pursuit of wealth oft proves in vain (unless you have inherited;
Or stumbled on it; or, again, received more than you merited.)

All worldly honors bear a thorn, and whoso would them handle,
Will often wish he'd ne'er been born, on fortune's knee to dandle.

Full many a mortal falls in love without consideration
That one or "t'other" is above (or else below) their station.

These episodes oft leave a scar that all our days may vex us.
(Which of you never "got a jar" around the solar plexus?)

Some blessings come, like hurricanes, to cool our mental vision.
The pessimist, when he complains, is met with our derision.

Men say that this, or that's a curse, when things seem most dis-
tressing.

But then, you know "it might be worse." 'Tis a Blessing! Bless-
ing!! Blessing!!!

* * *

Yes, every disagreeable thing which happens while we're living,
And all the sadness it may bring, is a subject for thanksgiving.
And though your heart-strings snap in twain, from sorrows that
may gather,
Your duty still seems very plain: just thank your Heavenly
Father!

Dec. 1, 1907

GOOD BYE TO 1907.

Good Bye, old year! Good bye! To me no kindness hast thou shown!—

(Beyond the boon of health, and strength to hold my own.)
The dearest cords that bind the heart, thy passing days have rent.
Life's tragedies came trooping past, as thy moments came and went.—

What thy successor has in store, is kindly hid from me.
I would not lift the friendly veil, his mysteries to see.
But though he blot out life itself, and all my hope of heaven,
He cannot strike more cruel blows than thou,—O nineteen-seven!
The future paints no picture, bright with rosy radiant tints,
To urge me on, or hold me back.—Life proffers me no hints
Of fairer days, of happier hours, of work that I must do:—
I can but feel, the coming year will much resemble you!
But should he guide my weary feet along a thorny way:
The daily sorrow, grief or pain suffices for the day.
Courageously I'll face the new.—To thee, (so soon to die),
Forgiveness for the havoc wrought! Good Bye, old year, Good
Bye!

11:30 p. m., Dec. 31, 1907.

TOO OLD.

I said, as my grandson stood at my knee,
“How old are you, Bunch of Gold?”
He paused a moment to look in my eyes,
Then answered, “Wayn-ee two old!”

* * *

A vision arose of boyish hopes,
Of beautiful things “to be,”
Of youthful dreams in maturer age;—
All came in a wave to me.

I remember how often an impulse stirred,
While sailing on life's great sea,
To steer my craft toward some dazzling goal
Regardless of surf on my lee.

But back to me came those selfsame words
(With a sinister meaning and cold)
"Those seas are no more for you to sail,
Remember that you are—too old!"

God bless thee boy! Yet I cannot wish
Thy path may be free from snares,
No pitfalls await thy youthful feet
To entangle them unawares,
For these, make life! And for thee I but ask
The power to overcome;
To stand for the right, and follow the light,
Till you go to your long, long home!
May you never feel as the days go by,
And you think of your work undone,
That anything failed of accomplishment
Which depended on you alone.
May you never have cause to repeat those words,
My dear little lump of gold,
And say with tears and with many a sigh,
"Alas! I'm too old! too old!"

Dec. 7, 1907

A TOUCH OF HEREAFTER.

Mrs. Winnie Wild, fell very deep in love.
(Of course she had no business to do this;—
She was not quite an angel, or a dove;—
Her lips were not the kind just made to kiss.
She did not seem so young as she had been;
Had no great wealth, to make her quite a catch.

You see at once how very,—very, green
The widow was to love a nice “old bach!”)

However, the Creator, has endowed
Some people, with propensity for love!
Quite often have the stoniest hearted, bowed
To this sentiment; this “Something from above!”
The lady had a fairly level head;—
She saw the many “lions” in her way;—
And yet, she fell in love, as I have said
Yea, kept on falling deeper, every day.

She waited for the advent of leap-year,
And then she broke the ice, with this “old bach.”
Her heart was beating fast with hope and fear
As she bravely told her love, to Mr. Hatch,
“He, very coldly said to Mrs. Wild,
This really is a dreadful shock to me!
You should not talk, or act, so like a child.
Just let us be— good friends now, don’t you see?”
(Yet all the time, his manner, plainly said
“The foolish woman! How she pesters me!
What ever put that notion in her head!
Why she should love at all, I cannot see!”)

The widow, too, was very much perplexed.
“How can he blame me that I love him so?
’Tis passing strange that he should seem so vexed!
(But why I love him still, I do not know!”)

And so they drifted very far apart—
(Millions of miles, it seemed to Mrs. Wild)—
Because, she had a loving woman’s heart
And longed for love, as when she was a child.

A gift from God? (Ah yes! But curse or blessing?)
Is it a subject for our jibes and laughter?
I’m sure that Mrs. Wild, felt like confessing,
“’Tis certainly a taste of the hereafter!”

LONG LEGGED LIMERICKS.

An eminent man lived in Dwight, who stole every dollar in sight,
Then he founded a college for imparting knowledge
That to steal from the public is right.

A lady who lived in Milwaukee, removed far away to Pensaukee.
But every one knew, that wherever she flew
She'd continue her slanderous talkee.

Another fair dame lived in Bonner. Her dealings were all upon
honor.
Her eggs and her butter were "utterly utter"
(If you ate them you'd soon be a goner!)

Some hardened old sinners in France, told the young 'twould
their pleasure enhance
To fill up with booze, and annoy whom they choose
And to clean out the crowd at a dance!

A fellow who lived in Podunk, was possessed of great honor and
spunk,
For during his life he would wallop his wife
Whenever he chose to get drunk.

These parties all died in due season. They were lied about all
beyond reason.
Since their lives were no better, each word, and each letter
Which misrepresents them is treason!

ELIJAH'S MANTLE?

In his "Memorial Sermon," our parson, (touching war,) Said "Patriotic soldiers, will come from near and far
Whene'er the country calls them; and not a man will lag
When his services are needed, to uphold the laws and flag!"
(And I thought, while he was speaking, that I heard the bugle-call.
But no: 'tis boys of nineteen-six, playing their "Sunday ball"!)

* * *

He mentioned old Elijah, and the miracles he wrought,
And how the inspiration, was by Elisha caught.—
Said "every generation is better than the last.
The country's future, sure must be, much greater than her past!"
(While out on dry-goods boxes, on horseblocks, hitching rails;
Sat the rising generation, consuming "coffin-nails".)

Behold the sallow, dwarfish imps, inhaling nicotine!
Like the Mexican, the "Greaser," and their brother Philippine!
While others, in some fizz-house, are building up a "jag"!
Do these bear a great resemblance to the men who saved the flag?

With utter disregard for law, (for others' rights, as well,)
Debauching constitutions, and making earth a hell:
Are these to be our soldiers when some nation stirs us up?
(Ah! You cannot grow a lion, from a little poodle pup!)

To be sure there are exceptions. — But look about today;
See one young man with self respect, and ten,—the other way!
The lawless, rude degenerates, won't let the "mantle" flutter!—
They smoke, and stink, and swear, and drink, and drag it in the gutter.

WHO ARE SANE?

To assist some crazy sinner out of jail,
Few alienists were ever known to fail
In a search for proof of madness; (which is found in mirth,
or sadness,
Or attempts to fly a kite without a tail.)

One is crazy if he calls himself a king;
Or gives imagination extra swing.
But of all things neath the heavens, (if we credit Doctor
Evans),
Exaggerated Ego, is, the, thing!

Let no man get a notion in his head
That faith devoid of works, is really dead.
Never hustle for reform.—'Tis a sign of mental storm!
(Too much "ego" like the sort of which we've read.)

When officials fail to execute the law, (or play the violators to a "draw")
If you press for law enforcement, you receive but weak endorsement
You have "ego", just as bad as Harry Thaw!

'Tis all the same in Potsdam or Oswego; in Cattaraugus county or Otsego
When all your force you bring, to accomplish anything,
They'll swear you have exaggerated ego! But!

From Baffins Bay to Terrae del Fuego. In Shanghai,
or the village of Owego
You cannot find a man, worth a tinker's,—AMSTERDAM,—
Who never had a touch of this same "Ego"!
So there! Doctor Evans.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

A Prophet once came to the land of Low Jack,
Declaring the gospel of "Right."
He paused not one moment, but feeling the truth
Proclaimed it by day and by night.
The sin of hypocrisy clearly outlined,
Till the hypocrite fain would be true.
The skeptic he harassed until he believed,
And was orthodox,—really true blue.

The drunkard, adulterer, gambler and thug,
The scoffer profane, and the thief,
Each fell into line, and acknowledged his sin;—
(Very much to the public relief):—
And yet, be it known as a curious fact,
The prophet fell into disgrace
By mentioning once in a while, in his talks
An "idol" set up in that place!

Then the Elders, and Scribes, and the Pharisees all
Assembled and "sat upon" him.
His cup of iniquity really was full,
Heaped up, running over the brim!
For he told them, "tobacco is nasty, and vile!"
He insulted their god in his home:
And they'll never forgive him while here upon earth
Nor eke in the world to come!

1906

JIM'S MISTAKE.

(Suggested by a news item.)

Jim Jamson went cursing and swearing
And howling about on the street
His manners seemed quite overbearing
To strangers he happened to meet.
Still he passed as a pretty good fellow
And very few noticed his ways.

(To curse, and to howl, and get mellow
Is the custom of some, nowadays.)

It happened that Jim was converted,
And gave up his "figures of speech."
The streets of the town seemed deserted
Without his melodious screech!
No more was his talk interlarded
With blank-et-ty blank-it-y blanks
Instead of those curses discarded
Jim frequently offered up thanks.

This habit, grown stronger, enthralled him.
He multiplied prayers day by day.
Wherever his vocation called him
Jim paused very often, to pray,
And always he prayed with such fervor
While urging all men to repent,
That hypocrite, rogue, or time server
Could easily tell who was meant!

Alarmed by his conduct erratic
The citizens rose in their might,
Demanding in terms quite emphatic
That Jim be locked up, very tight!
To a madhouse they sent the poor fellow
And there he is passing his days
Because, having ceased getting mellow,
He now everlastingly prays!

MORAL.

In order to win approbation,
Chew navy, and spit on the floor!
Make brilliant your whole conversation
With cuss-words as big as a door.
Blow smoke, till the air becomes hazy,
Get drunk as a fool every day.
Yet, no one will think you are "crazy",
Unless you should happen TO PRAY!

TEST OF A POET.

"Poets are born, not paid."—Oshkosh Northwestern.

Oh! Let us sing praise unto him, who found the true test of a poet!
Old standards are hazy and dim; one might be the thing, and not
know it.

His verses quite perfect in meter, the spelling and syntax complete
With prosody even "completer";—each line with afflatus replete.
And yet, in our minds there would linger, most serious doubt
and misgiving

If, in spite of the ink on his finger, his rhymes would not bring
him a living!

This test makes all clear as the sun. Keep rhyming, be never
afraid.

Born poets write merely for fun; the counterfeits only are paid!

1906.

WHY NOT SPEAK GOOD OF THE CRITIC?

"Let something good be said."—J. Whitcomb Riley.

We have men in this civilized land, who set all our laws at defiance,
An organized, law-breaking band; on money they place their re-
liance.

They dictate to courts, suborn legislature, and steal when they
feel in that mood.

Don't you think, Mr. Riley, 'tis quite against nature
To ask us to say something good?

There's a pretty fair average man, who belongs to a great con-
gregation.

He pretends to do all that he can, for God, and for Christ and
the nation.

But sometimes, to win an election, he barter religion for votes.
Is there anything good in connection with bar-rooms, and brothels,
and bloats?

Surrounded by legions of devils, dishonesty scandal and crime,
Shall we ever get rid of these evils by calling them good, all the
time?

Nay, nay, Mr. Riley; The Savior was never thus smooth and
politic!—

He, often denounced bad behavior; so, let us speak good of the
critic!

1906

TO HAMILTON MUSGROVE

(Who writes "Lucifer hath their souls in hell.
And their gold, and their empires, where are they?")

According to scripture, my excellent friend,
The streets of heaven are paved with gold.
Jehovah's temple with ornaments shone
All made from that metal, in times of old.—
And their empires are mostly remaining on earth,
Extended, contracted, divided, enlarged;
For kingdoms and hovels descend to the "heirs".
(Provided all debts are paid off or discharged.)

* * *

It wearies one greatly, to read that the devil
Is busy IN HELL, with the souls of the dead,
Because of the power God gave him for evil!—
(All punishment falls on the poor mortal's head).
Is it fair, to consign all their souls to perdition,
While empires and kingdoms remain to this day?
But since you insist that you know their condition,
Pray tell us, IS HELL, SUCH A VERY LONG WAY?

1905

THEY ALL MOULT.

A pet canary bird that sang, and trilled, and warbled gaily
Became morose, refused to sing, and grew more gloomy daily.
The children marvelled at the change, and anxiously inquired
“Is birdie sick?” The mother said, “He’s moulting and feels tired.”
The price of eggs was running high; we asked the why, and
wherefore?

The grocer said “About this time the hens are moulting, therefore
They cease to lay, and loaf around, and wallow in the gravel;
And those who look for fresh laid eggs, have a rocky road to
travel.”

A peacock spread his plumage gay; his voice was loudly calling
From early spring till autumn time, when maple leaves were falling.
We asked his owner why the bird was silent for a season.
He answered very flippantly, “He’s moulting, that’s the reason!”

A Rhymer, harassed editors, for weeks and months together.
Nor let them rest in storm or shine, in drouth or rainy weather.
He ceased his lay. They thought him dead, or that his wits had
failed him,
But later on discovered he was moulting.

That’s

What

Ailed

Him!

October, 1905

SNOW IN POTSDAM.

O'er Potsdam, when the sun was low
All spotless lay the unsullied snow
And bright as silver, was the glow
Of moonbeams shining cheerily.

But Potsdam saw another sight
When men, and urchins, day and night
Had chewed, and spit with all their might
And daubed her streets most shamefully.

Last eve, the snow lay like a fleece;
So pure, so white, without one crease.
Today!—(It makes us think of—geese,—
That walk our streets quite frequently).

It came in flakes, all pure and white.
Has been here only one short night,—
But spattered now from left to right
With brown spots, showing dirtily!

Ah! What an intellectual feat!
To chew, to spit, stale jokes repeat,
And then go chewing down the street
Still squirting juice promiscuously!

Potsdam! (In York State understand,—
The only village in our land
Where gentlemen (?) of any brand
Conduct themselves thus boorishly),—

What giant intellects are thine!
How gloriously their names will shine,
When they go charging down the line
And capture purgatory!

1905.

THOSE BOYS.

It is April ninth again, and the patter of the rain
Reminds me it is forty years today,
Since, with knapsack on my back,
I pursued the downward track
Along Red River's very devious way.

If I recollect aright, there had been an awkward fight
At the cross-roads leading somewhere toward Sabine.
And with gunboats on the rocks,
Banks experienced several shocks,
And seemed to lose control of the machine!

What a host of jolly boys! Full of jokes and songs and noise;
Disaster even could not keep them down.
They would build a dam, or fight,
Or keep marching day and night
As persistent as the soul of Old John Brown!

Ah! Well! 'Twas long ago! Ere many years, I know
All the boys will hear them pass the word along;—
“Father Abra'am calls for you,
He awaits his boys in blue!”
And we'll all be there! Six hundred thousand strong!

1904

ROCKY RHYMES.

Oh the types! The horrible types!
Dealing our manuscript terrible swipes.
Ruining modes, and changing the tense,
Leaving our efforts bereft of all sense!
They seem to delight in misquoting copy.

And rendering rhetoric vapid and sloppy.
 They gleefully substitute saving for raving,
 And say she was lying, (I know she was laving);
 The dignified lawyer they mention as "she."
 And the innocent snow flake becomes a snow flea!
 The types made it "common"—I wrote cannon ball.
 They insist he was "grinding"—(not guiding at all.)
 If publishers used a poetic typesetter,
 I am sure that some rhymes would look very much better.
 Of course the compositors make no mistakes,
 But the types!—Oh!—The types!
 They're a terror to snakes!

1904

A PARADOX.

It staggers reason! It confounds the soul!
 And puts to flight the rules of common sense;
 When Christian nations, suddenly grown blind,
 Engage in war! - (Like tribes in darkness dense
 Who never heard of the beautitudes,
 Or gospel preaching in their latitudes.)—

And when the war is on and cannons boom,
 And scores of thousands strive in deadly rage
 'Mid blood and carnage, death and awful gloom,
 When murderous deeds their daily thoughts engage:
 Then will those Christian people kneel and pray
 That God may help "our" side to win the day!

And men of kindly hearts, and full of love,
 Men Christ-like in their broad benevolence,
 Whose spirits are as mild as gentle dove,
 Devoid of hatred and malevolence,—
 These SMILE when told of hundreds who have died
 IF THEY WERE WARRING FOR THE OTHER SIDE!

The soldier bravely facing showers of lead
Hurl'd at him by his Christian brother man,—
With murder in his heart, and purpose dread
To slay as many Christians as he can,—
Prays, (while his eyes with film of death grow dim,)
Unto the Prince of Peace who died for him!

Oh Christ! Who died to bring a reign of peace,
Oh God! Who notes the tiny sparrow's fall,
When shall this heathen self-deception cease?
This paradox of "prayer—and—cannon-ball?"
How can we serve "Him", and yet slay our brother?
God make us wholly one thing, or the other!

1904

A REAL PATRIOT.

A soldier whose first name was Jud,
Who battled, and marched in the mud,
Was jolly and gay till we mustered for pay,
Then his spirits came down with a thud!

For he was of patriot stock,
Like the pilgrims of Old Plymouth Rock,—
And the coin of the land would blister his hand
And give his whole system a shock!
So he gave his best years to the nation,
Without furlough, or pause, or vacation.
And he paid his own bills, for clothing and pills,
Nor asked Uncle Sam for one ration.
Now he preaches the gospel "at cost"
And may always be found at his post.
But he never takes money; eats locusts and honey;
While seeking the lambs that are lost.
At least we infer this is true, for he recently started a hue,
By declaring the pension, a wicked invention
For soiling and smirching the "blue"!

1904.

G. A. R. ENCAMPMENT 1904.

I went to the Encampment, to meet with Company G.
But two fell in for roll-call, just comrade Fred, and me.
Some had no time, some couldn't go so far away from home.
A few are living here and there; but most, in Kingdom Come.

I saw a thousand men, or so, with beards and locks of gray,
To represent the host of boys who gaily marched away
To fight, to bleed, perchance to die, for Union, and for law,
A sadder sight in all my life I'm sure I never saw!

So wierd, so wrinkled, and so old! 'Twas like a squad of ghosts,
Instead of boys of sixty-one, a part of Lincoln's hosts!
And then to think! The register shows all of Company "G."
Who were present at the roll-call, just comrade Fred, and me!

I have no love for carnage: and war is murderous work.
Unfit for Christian nations; in fact beneath the Turk.
But I'm MOURNING for those legions, for those marches AND THE
CAMPS,
For the quartermaster, sutler, for the heroes and the SCAMPS!

The boys I used to quarrel with, I long to see again,
As I saw them on the marches:—and I miss the wagon train,
The batteries, the orderlies, the knapsack and the gun.
The kicker with his growling, and the joker with his fun.

More frequent than the memory of childhood's early days,
Of youthful joys, and distant scenes, where fancy often strays;
The vision of those lines of blue that wound along the Tesc~~h~~e .
Envelop me, surround me, and enclose me in their mesh.

And in dreams I see them ever, just the same as years ago.
I behold the glist'ning muskets, and I hear the bugles blow.

Till I feel their presence near me, as the columns move along
In swinging stride to drum-tap, or with bits of German song.

* * *

It may be sacrilegious, but I'm hoping that I'll meet
Those columns once more, tramping along the golden street!—

* * *

But here I'll never see them more! And brave old Company "G."
When mustered at Encampment, consists of, Fred—and—me!

SONG OF THE AUTOMOBILE.

I'm a rearing, tearing automobile
I am known from Alaska, clear to Castile!
I can cripple a fellow, and spoil his profile
Like the Juggernaut car of India.

I'm a terror to people along the highway
For I scorch three hundred miles in a day:
And fellows with horses get out of the way
Of this Juggernaut car from India!

The horses too, must get off the earth!
They were well enough till I had my birth.
But creatures like horses excite the mirth
Of the Juggernaut car from India.

I am cursed by horsemen in loudest tones.
But the doctors are smiling, and mending the bones,
(And answering calls over telephones)—
Behind the car from India!

Along the level, and round the turn
I sputter, and rattle, and stink, and churn

And "get there Eli" with speed to burn
I'm the Juggernaut car from India!

Let the day be cold, or the day be hot
I keep up the pace, and falter not.
I am "hunkadora" in every spot
From here clear through to India!

Ah! What is that? A cloudy sky?
With splashes of rain, and mists that fly?
It suits me better to have it dry,—
The way it is in India!

I fear my triumph is nipped in the bud.
The rain descends with a terrible thud,
Converting dust into slippery mud
Which is bad for the car from India!

* * *

Well! Here I am, stuck hard and fast!
My pride has had a fall at last;—
(I wish some farmer would happen past
And snail me back to India!)—

Ah! Good old horse! Most excellent beast!
Just give me a little help at least,
And of oats you shall have a royal feast
When you've pulled me back toward India!

My pride is humbled; and never again
On hill, or vale, or level plain,
Will I kill, or frighten, or give you pain
As since I came from India!

* * *

There! At last they have pulled me in!
The horsemen are chaffing my owner like sin!
And all the world is grinning a grin!
(I wish I was back in India!)

THE WEB OF LIFE.

Now cometh the party who singeth the song,
“Your life here is just what you make it!”
Who blows a big trumpet, and hammers the gong,
Shouting his creed to the wondering throng,
Who rides the old hobby, (or leads it along),
And can’t be induced to forsake it.

“Those mortals who erred since the world began,
Have had no occasion to stray!”
So says the good orthodox, well behaved man;—
(And all of us mortals come under this ban):—
But let him explain—if he fancies he can,
HOW WE CAME TO BE BUILT THAT WAY!

Heredity (back to the ape of the crags)
Has twisted the “warp” of each life.
Environment furnishes thousands of bags
Full of shoddy, and woolen, some silk and some rags,
With cast off garments and old battle flags
From the world’s great fields of strife.

And we weave our tangles as best we may
With the “filling” that falls to our hand.
Selecting the fragments from day unto day
In a haphazard, crude and mechanical way,
(As the lights and the shades on the “warp” may play
Or necessity seems to demand).

But the idiot’s brain and the brain of a sage
Each came to the man unsought.
“Impressions prenatal” cause folly to rage,
Or genius to strut on the world’s great stage.

And thus it continues from age unto age!
Is it all what each man hath wrought?

The soul who inherits a highly keyed mind,
And moral perceptions acute,
With honor inbred, and a conscience to bind:—
And another, whose instinct resembles the kind
Psychologists tell us they frequently find
Wrapped up in the form of a brute;—

With all their environment ever the same,
Will still be unlike to the last!
The one seeks religion, and learning, and fame;
While the other considers such matters quite tame;
Would rather drift into the sink holes of shame:—
Will prefer something “spicy and fast.”

Now shout the old story and ring the old bell,
And sing your old song if you can!
But you'll find that “inherited qualities” tell.
They cause us to sin,—to repent,—to do well.
Shape our ideas of heaven, of earth and of hell!
FOR THEY, LIMIT THE BREADTH OF EACH MAN!

But keep up your shouting, “The weak and the strong
Each makes his own weakness or strength!”
Just mount the old hobby, and gallop along!
It “encourages” people who play the game wrong
To hear your sweet voice and the sound of your “gong”,
As you give your opinion at length!

With abnormal genius for finance or art,
For poetry, music, or war;
One mounts to the top, (after getting a start),—
And wins many laurels in playing his part.
While another (with genius for pushing a cart,)
Shows more manhood, more virtue by far!

But since God is God, and he still is alive,
And man is the work of his hand.
Hear the final conclusion at which we arrive.
Do the best you know how! (It is worth while to strive).
Be good for good's sake.—Take heed how you live
“That your days may be long in the land”!

1904

VANITIES OF LITERATURE.

A rhymmer tells me ruefully, “When I compose in verse,
Expressing very fervently,—in language clear and terse,
Some bold and lofty sentiment, to hand down through the ages,
The typos mutilate a word, or blot whole lines or pages!”

(Anathema Maranatha!)

Alas! Alack! and well-a-day! We know the pain you're feeling.
It often turns the stomach sick, and sets the senses reeling!
But many times they “make up forms” that offer compensation,
And mix our rhymes with panaceas “For healing of the nation.”

(Sold by all druggists.)

'Twere well, if by some lucky chance, our rhymes should sell for
money.

Like Brandeth's pills, or chewing gum, or Foley's tar and honey!
'Tis all well meant, howe'er it reads, this mingling good and evil,
For printers are philanthropists, even the printer's devil.

(Found in every office.)

I sometimes scold about mistakes. They know I'm quite a kicker,
Therefore to keep my temper sweet, and heal my troubles quicker,

They often run my lines this way: "Reflections, Druggists sell it.
Castoria." (The rest looks well no matter how they spell it.)

If I should write the word "extol" and it appears "extent,"
The printer knows 'twill make me ill, and yet he "lets it went!"
Placing an ad. of Sovereign Balm, where I am sure to read it,
(“For sale by licensed pharmacists, let every sick one heed it!”)

Some odd confusion might arise from mingling rhymes with
"healer."

They'll think, perhaps, that druggists sell, or "children cry for"
Wheeler!

And when I've joined the choir above to chant *Te Deum Gloria*,
You'll see some lines of mine appear, with credit to Castoria!

Should printers reconstruct the verse that you've poured out your
soul on,

Destroying rhythm, meter, sense, (to save a semi-colon);
When incidents like this arise, pray never lose your temper,
Nor hurl at them anathemas. The printers were *SIC SEMPER!*

It will not do to show you're hurt! Should they suspect you're
ailing,

They'll dose you well with panaceas, and nostrums quite unfailing.
By mixing poems, puns, and pills, they'll give you *Salmagundi*,
Until, at last, you'll weakly sigh "*SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI.*"

1905

A BUSINESS MAN'S RELIGION(?)

I admire the golden rule, and the beatitudes.
The decalogue appeals to common sense.--
But we can't run business, on such platitudes!
A business man must cheat in self defense.

I'm a Christian, I am honest, and I'm just.
I believe in competition, and all that.
But of course it's best for me to join a trust,
For in business I must render tit for tat.

I despise a vicious, narrow-minded thief,
But our salaries are now so very small
That I often find, to give my purse relief
I must work a graft, or get no pay at all.

I love the flag, our country, and the law,
Yet every now and then, I seem to be
In places where I'm glad to find a flaw
Which enables me to REALIZE, don't you see?

I'm too practical to practice what I preach.
What better can a modern preacher do?
The principles I always try to teach
You'll find correct. And they apply to you.

I merely take advantage of the times.
When some neighbor wants to sell so very bad
That I'm sure to harvest dollars from my dimes,—
Perhaps I might accommodate the lad.

But of course the golden rule can't be applied
In all our common every day affairs!
(It is something that I never yet have tried.
No man ever beat four aces with two pairs!)

Now when it comes to matters of belief,
I am solid as the very Pope of Rome!
In songs of praise I find a sweet relief,
I love to think about my heavenly home.

But I'm practical. I know I cannot carry
My religion into selling milk, or honey.
And while within this vale of tears I tarry
My duty is to make a pile of money!
"See?"

1905

SONG OF STALWARTS.

(Politics of 1903.)

Now its hey the legislature beating every thing in nature,
With its Senate bills, Assembly bills (and whiskey bills galore).
How soon the members tumble, when amid the horrid jumble
Some measure full of "meat" is at the fore!

No more they seek for "passes" for the many party asses
Who voted in the members of the gang.
But they "get there" with the mileage, and accumulate much
"silage"

Against the time the people say "Go hang!"

How they hammer at the taxes: while they grind their little axes
For months and weeks, from morn till half-past eight.
And they do not mind expenses, while they toggle up their fences.
"Whats the odds? Old Jones, he pays the freight!"

And those chaps that look so nobby, who now constitute the lobby
Like the devil, are "quite busy, and on hand."
With their argument and wallet, (any way to beat La Follette)
For the corporations "occupy the land!"

And its hey the railroad lobby! (Curse La Follette and his hobby)
If we stalwarts only down his measures now,
Let the railroads dodge their their taxes: so we only grind our axes
And browse again with Scofield, and, "The cow!"

1903.

WHAT IS A GOOD CITIZEN?

Said Mr. A. to Mr. B., "I think it rather queer.
You do not use tobacco nor whiskey, ale or beer.
Toward our internal revenue, you never pay one cent!
Now tell me, of what use are you to our great government?"

Mr. B.

"Tis not to aid the government you smoke, and chew, and guzzle!
(Why you will do it anyway has always been a puzzle):—
Now really A., I just believe you'd keep on drinking deeper
If whiskey taxes were removed, and you could buy it cheaper.

"I must confess, on revenue, I am not so very strong.
But then perhaps in other ways I help the world along.
I try to lead a decent life. (If each man in our nation
Would do the same, it might improve the rising generation.)

"I do not teach dishonesty, by precept, or example.
I try to do no neighbor wrong, nor let him on me trample.
My voice I think you'll always find, is raised for law and order.
For giving vice a gentle push, to send it from our border.

"Not much of course, I'm only one, among our many millions,
But units count as much in this, as they do in raising billions,
And though it may not bring in wealth, or make one wild and
frisky,
Perhaps it aids good government, as much as drinking whiskey."

1905

FROM 29th WIS. VOL.

(To Wis. State Journal, 1865.)

In camp of the 29th "Wild Badger Boys"
Near by that city of bustle and noise
New Orleans, Louisiana, the 26th day,
Of the month January, I'm writing away.
Can you Messrs. editors grant my request
To publish this letter? And thus set at rest
My friend's anxious heart? And your readers may learn
Where the regiment went to, upon its return
From the "Wolf River trip;" which was followed next day
By a trip to this place;—(upon boats by the way!)—
Where General Steele assumes the command
Of the whole reserve Corps, upon river and land.

Our 3rd Brigade's gone, General Andrews and all.
(Perhaps on our friends in Mobile he may call,
For Gulf steamers took them, where'er they are bound.
But the papers say nothing,—which proves they are sound.)
Though picket and drill are unknown in our camp,
We take little comfort—"Southern rain is so damp!"
Inspections are frequent. In spite of the rain,
The health of the boys very good in the main.
With the greatest respect my Dear Sirs, I remain
Yours Truly: (Print this and I'll write you again.)

(Acrostic to John D. P——)

J ohn, old friend your letter kind
O f this month 8th, the date
H as come to hand, and found us well—
N ed, William, Mark, and Clayt.

P erhaps we feel a little shy
L est orders come some day
A nd hurry us to Galveston,
C harleston, or Mobile Bay.
K irby Smith too, worries us:
E ach day we feel a dread
T hat Banks will be compelled again
T o dam(n) the River Red.

F orrest and Hood are at Corinth,
R ichard Taylor too.
O ld Price's rogues, if left unwatched,
M ischief will surely do.

H ow then, can we expect to be
I nactive for one day?
S o many places to be watched
O n river, gulf, and bay?
L ittle we'd care for all of that
D id Uncle "Sam-u-ELL"

F ulfill the contract on his part
"R ight smart" of greenbacks shell.
I mmediately! And not oblige
E ach man in the brigade
N ight and day, to scowl, and say
"D ang it! why aren't we paid?"

M ud prevails in Kennersville
A fter a five days rain;
R aw piercing winds, cold freezing nights,
K illing to mules and men.

W e hear Fort Fisher fell at last.
H urrah! That's what we like.
E nglish smuggling now must cease,
E re long hard blows we'll strike.
L ets have "300,000 more"
E re Lee can gather head
R ight soon we'll show them whether they

C an "Whip the Yankees dead!"
O ld friend, with love to all, I'll say

G. ood Bye until another day.

P. S.—When we arrived in New Orleans, we found part of the men lost in the fight of April 8th, paroled, and safe again. Many had died, others escaped, but seventeen survived. Among the rest Frank Everett and Clarkson have arrived. The sick go home for sixty days. And matters were arranged to furlough all; in lieu of which, they all have been "exchanged."

WE ARE GOING, FATHER ABRA'AM.

“We are COMING, Father Abra'am, 600,000 more,”

Was the song which woke the echoes, and pealed from shore to shore;

In the days of doubt and darkness, when mad misguided men

Were rallying to “SECESSION'S” flag in every southern glen.

But now, when peace is nigh at hand, our work seems almost done;—

We are “GOING”, Father Abra'am! We soon are GOING HOME!

(Chorus) We are going, we are going, our work is well nigh done;—

We are going, Father Abra'am, we soon are going home!

We left our plows and workshops, our wives and children dear,
To serve our country, in her need, (while cowards shook with fear).

For thirty long and weary months, on many a gory field,

We fought, and struggled for the “right,” compelling foes to yield.

The graves of comrades mark the plains, where victories were won;—

But, we're GOING, Father Abra'am, we soon are going home!

If you look throughout our northern land, in many a cottage door
You'll see a group still waiting stand, for those who'll come no more!

And many eyes o'er run with tears, at sight of marching men,

While others brighten at the thought “They'll soon be home again!”

And now shall many hearts be glad, for the time has almost come!

We are going, Father Abra'am! We soon are GOING HOME!

You have been a loving father, and fed us day by day,

With coffee, meat, and hard tack:—(but have lately failed to PAY!)

Yet friends at home are dear to us, we long to clasp their hands,

To earn our bread, open our shops;—to once more till our lands.

So we leave your service cheerfully,— our task is so near done.
And we're GOING, Father Abra'am, we soon are going HOME!!!

CHORUS.

NOTE. This song for volunteers of 1862-5 was written for Mobile Register in 1865. Before it was in type the sad news of the tragic death of Lincoln was received, and the song was not suitable to our feeling after that event; hence it was never published. It is now put in type at the request of my old bunk mate, J. J. Donovan of Co. G., 26th Wis. Vol.

RUMSELLER'S DREAM.

(A parody written and read in Token Creek Lodge I. O. G. T. 1858.)

In visions of midnight the rumseller lay,
His sign swinging loose to the sport of the wind.
He was brimful of lager, imbibed through the day,
And visions of customers haunted his mind.
He dreamed of his bar-room well crowded with boys,
Who mock at religion, and temperance scorn,
While each, 'mid the shouting, hallooing, and noise
Walks up with his sixpence and orders a horn.

Then fancy, her magical pinions displayed
And bade the old sinner in ecstasy rise:—
He left far behind all restriction of trade
Prohibition or license, no more curse his eyes.
The decanters and glasses are ranged on the wall,
Both lager and pop, stand temptingly by.
His bar-tender ready to answer each call
And into his till all the "sixpences" fly.

He leans o'er his coffers with looks of delight!
The shillings, the dimes and the quarters are here:

The half-dollars, dollars, and eagles unite
To swell the amount which his bosom holds dear.
The heart of the sleeper beats high in his breast!
Joy quickens his pulse, for the hard times seem o'er.
A chuckle of happiness breaks through his rest,
“That’s a pretty good pile, but I’m bound to have more.”

Ah! What is that sight which now bursts on his eye?
And whence is the sound, that resounds on his ear?
’Tis the Good Templar badge; and their loud ringing cry
As they come to do battle with whiskey and beer.
He springs from his bunk and he flies to the bar.—
Amazement confronts him with spectacle dire,
His customers mounting the temperance car
Leaving plenty of whiskey, but scarcely a buyer!

Like glaciers the Templars march steadily on.
All in vain does he look for his victims’ return.
To the teetotal standard the volunteers throng,
And bright on the hillsides their watch fires burn.
O rumseller! Woe to thy dream of delight!
Disappointment now meets thee on every side.
Where now are those neat little “shiners” so bright
That were wont in thy waistcoat, and trousers to hide?

O Rumseller! Rumseller! never again
Shall the dimes of the tippler thy wishes repay.
Deprived of all hope, and all prospect of gain,
That pile of bright dollars will soon melt away.
Thou shalt finish thy days, and from earth pass away,
Ere thy troubles shall cease, or God’s vengeance be stayed!
Thy memory blasted forever and aye!
O Rumseller! Rumseller! Curst be thy trade!

ACROSTIC.

(Written while riding upon a load of wheat in 1861. The lady said "Do not DARE return from the postoffice without a letter for me!" She received this.)

Ö frown no more, imperious maid.
L et all your angry chiding cease.
Y our dread commands shall be obeyed;
E ven I will write for sake of peace.
'T is not that I expect to please,
T o satisfy your throbbing heart,
E ach fear allay with lines like these,
S oothe every pain, or joy impart.
M y motive is less worthy far;
I write from fear of your displeasure.
"T o save myself in time of war."
H ence I'll break off till I've more leisure.

1861

ANOTHER.

A valentine to an unknown writer.

C ome, clasp your hand in mine, dear girl;
L ean ever on my arm.
A way with every doubt and fear,
R est thou, secure from harm.
A ll that a maiden's heart can ask,
M ore than the poets sing.
K indest smiles and tenderest words
E ach happy hour shall bring.
E nshrined art thou within this heart.
L ove blends thy soul with mine.
E ternal joy is ours, if thou
R emain my Valentine!

Feb. 14, 1868

AN ANSWER.*

Miss Lilly: you ask me to "send you a message."
And plead like an angel of meekness and love.
Surely, such words of endearing affection
The heart of a Nero, to softness should move!

I am but human; my faults may be many,
But hardness of heart when a fair woman pleads
Is not of the number. Lo! here is my message
"To solace the heart which in agony bleeds!"

The ties of endearment that bound us together
Are severed completely, my charming coquette.
False to your vows, ever fickle and changing,
How can I trust to those words of regret?

"Send me a message!" (Indeed that sounds pretty!)
"To see you were rapture!" (How long since I pray?
The last time I called by appointment to see you
I was told very coolly, "Miss Lilly's away!")

"Do I not know that you think of me ever?"
Oh, certainly, why not? 'Tis pleasing, no doubt,
To think of old beaux you have long since discarded
While new ones are present, or waiting without!

Once I believed in your truth and devotion;
Worshipped you, loved you. But that is all o'er.
Your slave I will not be. Your puppet, your actor
Has played his engagement. You'll see him no more!

'Tis hard to forget, but I freely forgive you
For cheating my heart with a well acted lie.
The lesson was useful, I am sadder and wiser,
This is my message, Miss Lilly, Good Bye!

1868.

[*The above was a "random shot" suggested by a poem in *Waverly Magazine*, over nom de plume of Lilly Lovett, entitled, "SEND ME A MESSAGE." I was informed by the editor that my "answer" caused serious complications. However, I was merely drawing upon my imagination, as I have no idea who Lilly Lovett really was.—M. P. W.]

SEQUEL TO LORD LOCHINVAR.

(Upon hearing the original song a youth remarked
"It appears Lord Lochinvar was not a teetotaler.")

The years have flown by, bringing sorrow and grief;
And the runaway bride now mourns for her chief.
For the wine and the wassail their ruin have sown
And the fair lady weeps in that castle alone.
Though daring in love, and though dauntless in war,
The wine cup has conquered young Lord Lochinvar.

Lord Lochinvar revelled and rambled at will
While his bride in her chamber sat pallid and still.
To his castle returning, all reeking with wine
He beholds the bright tears in her bonny eyes shine,
And chides her, that thus she his pleasure should mar.
Heard you ever of husband like Lord Lochinvar?

Subdued by his foe, to the wine cup a slave,
Lord Lochinvar staggered and sunk to his grave.
While his lady, o'erburdened with sorrow and shame,
Still sobbing, and weeping, and calling his name,
Cries aloud,—and her wailing is echoed afar,—
Oh! beware of the fate of brave Lord Lochinvar!

1870

THREE TIPPLERS.

Three tipplers went strolling out into the street,
Out into the street as the sun went down.
Each thought of the tippie that suited him best;
(And the police kept watch of them all over town).
For brewers must brew and tipplers must drink

And nobody cares what teetotalers think;
“To the deuce with their preaching and groaning!”

Three wives sat up until half past twelve;
Stitching away since the sun went down.
And they gazed at their children with bare little feet,
Saw the worn out coat and the ragged gown.
But distillers must live, and tipplers must drink,
Though families perish and nations may sink,
While alms-house and prison are groaning.

Three drunkards lay on the station house floor
From four o'clock until half-past nine.
And their children are crying with hunger and cold.
(For it took their last farthing to pay their fine.)
But saloons must flourish and men must drink,
And who cares a cent what teetotalers think?
“To the deuce with fanatical groaning!”

1869.

RESPONSE TO THE TOAST “THE WEEPING WILLOW.”

When this planet was young, and sweet poets sung
Of the frolics and triumphs of cupid,
They dwelt upon love, and the turtle dove,
In a style now considered quite stupid.
They warbled of darts, and broken hearts,
Of lovers, the moonlight, the billow.
But better than these, or the birds or the bees,
They loved to sing of the willow!

Did a lover neglect, or a maiden reject,
On the willow, the harp was soon rusting.
And the owner they'd see beneath the same tree,
With a heart that was very near “busting.”

He'd sit there till he froze, or caught cold in his nose,
Which soon brought his head to the pillow,
Where the form once so agile would grow very fragile,
And at last be laid under the willow.

In these common place times, for a maker of rhymes,
There is little the dullness to vary.
Pray what can be said, when the pair have been wed,
Save "John, is the husband of Mary?"*
But now I rejoice, and my muse has found voice,
For if William did marry Miss Dillow
It is pleasant to know, that in wedding her beau
She is tied to a tall—robust—WILL—O!†

1871

*John Howie and Mary LaMont.

†Will Packham and Miss Dillow.

IT LOOKED GOOD TO SATAN.

As Satan was roaming abroad in the earth
He dropped in a hop yard one day,
To find how the business had prospered, and see
If the owner still thought it would "pay"!.

He asked if Good Templars had injured the trade
(And he grinned when he asked it, the elf!)—
The owner replied "Oh! they let us raise hops,
Why I'm a Good Templar myself!"

Then Satan cried "Good!" and his eyes fairly snapped
While he laughed with demoniac glee.
"Oh, Bravo!" he shouted "go in for the hops!
Ah! YOUR'E THE GOOD TEMPLAR FOR ME!"

January, 1868.

TUMBLE WEED POLITICIANS.

(Dakota Idylls 1888.)

Now the tumble weed doth tumble, and the granger loud doth grumble at the sight. And the little Jersey heifers, and the wild tumultuous zephyrs, roam at night.

Next the sportsman does his sporting, and the courtsman does his courting, very soon.—And the farmer plants his 'taters, and his wife her choice "termaters" in full moon.—Then the little striped gopher, and the chronic village loafer, are at work; and the birds in joyful meters, can sing and nab "muskeeters" with a jerk.

There's a prospect then of summer, for the lazy ragged bummer, walks and begs: and the hoppergrass and cricket make sweet music in the thicket,—with their legs!

Soon the ember days will follow; when the politicians hollow turn their coats. And each boss with all his forces, will hustle men and horses, hunting votes. They'll enlarge upon the dangers that beset the paths of grangers every year. And explain their own pretentions, both in caucus and convention, very clear. For the scheming politician is forever in position, night and day. In both fair and rainy weather you can find a pair together, "making hay"! Were honest men united, they might see that wrongs were righted for a while. But to listen to these charmers, when they orate to the farmers, makes us smile!

IRREPRESSIBLE CONFLICT.

(From South Dakota "Spring Idylls.")

By the aching of the blisters on my feet,
By the horrid pains rheumatic in my shanks,
By the clouds of dust arising on the streets,
I'm reminded of the time "we fought with Banks"!
With our wagon trains deployed among the pines,
And with cannon, mules and colored cooks galore,
We found ourselves, between the southern lines,
And decided to "retire" to Grand Ecore!

Now no more I take the musket in my hand,
Neither cartridge box or haversack I sling.
But I'm warring 'gainst the foemen of our land,
And must go upon the war path every spring.
There's the beetle, and the gopher, and the fox,
There's the weevil, and the hopper, and the louse,
There's the cut worm on the corn, and the gad fly on the ox,
And rats, and mice and bed bugs in the house. —

Let them prate of arbitration as they please.
The Creator most assuredly favored war!
But the conflict with such enemies as these
Would make an army chaplain "think a swar!"
Oh! to hear the roaring cannon and the shell!
Oh! to see the moving columns once again!
There's excitement in the loud hurrah and yell
When the enemy is fleeing o'er the plain!
But to war against the chinch-bug and the flea,
To surrender to the cut worm and the slug,
Is the final doom that's overtaken me.
For I'm now a peaceful—Quaker—farmer—plug!

1890

WHAT OTHER BUGS THINK.

A grasshopper lived by a field of grain, when harvest time was
nigh.
He watched the men as they cut and bound, and the stacks grew
large and high.
He scratched his nose, and remarked to his wife—"Now really,
Mrs. Green,
Those monstrous creatures are wonderful things, the oddest I've
ever seen!"
Then off he went, with a hop and a spring, to an anthill over the
way
To ask their sages about those "things,"—he'd discovered that
very day!
It chanced a convention of bugs had been called, to discuss "The
ascent of the soul."
From near and far came delegates; and the ant hill was their goal.
When all had assembled, the tumble-bug, was called upon to pre-
side.
He understands parliamentary law! (And several things beside!)
It is not my intention to give an account, of all that was done
that day,
But merely relate what the grasshopper learned of "those things"
just across the way.
The proceedings were all in the Latin tongue, (for every one
knows, to be sure,
That all kinds of "bugs," both little and big, speak Latin, sim-
ple and pure.)
When the "genus homo" was mentioned, of course a general buzz
went round;
Till "Order! Order!" called Tumble Bug, as he made his gavel
resound.—
Then Bumble Bée in a drowsy way, described the "creature in
pants;"
And various speakers referred to the raids it has made upon bees
and the ants.

“We all of us suffer immensely from him, and wish to get rid of the pest.

But beyond a doubt he has injured the bees far more than all the rest.”

There were many calls for Professor Drone, who quietly took the floor,

And discussed the “Homo” intelligently; repeating o’er and o’er—
“The creature has language! I’ve heard him speak! I can understand him well!”

And then in an off-hand commonplace way, proceeded his story to tell:

“Along last May”—said Mr. Drone, “I had very little to do. So I studied a Homo colony, and what I relate is true.

After hours of patient study and care, I could understand one word:

It is Deus they mean (though they speak it as God), and in all their talk it is heard.

By the middle of June I progressed so far, that I understand them well.

I have learned their very peculiar ideas of Deus, of heaven and hell.

It appears they imagine, the sun and the moon, the earth, and bugs, and bees,

Were brought out of chaos on their account,—(because they are larger than fleas!)

The head of this family prayed to his God to make him as pure as the snow.

(But the wad of tobacco between his jaws, made filthy sputa flow!)

They fouled the air with their horrid smoke, and fumes of sour beer,

While they sang the praise of Deus aloud in hymns of lofty cheer!
They pretend to believe they have souls to save, like ants, and worms, and bees!

But heaven will be no place for us, if full of such creatures as these!
From what I can learn of the Homo race, they are murderers, thieves and thugs!

They have no rights we are bound to respect. They're a menace
to bees and bugs.

They may have souls, (undeveloped of course), but they're sadly
in our way,

And when the earth is rid of them all, it will be a glorious
day!"—

Just at this point, a shower came up,—the convention adjourned
sine die.

But Grasshopper's wife declared that old Drone had "been telling
an awful lie!"

(Concerning the soul of a man, or a bug,—on earth or some other
sphere,—

Can it ever expand, or arise to grand heights mid the fumes of
tobacco and beer?)

1903.

ARE WE PHARISEES?

The Nazarene a rich man met,
One far more liberal than those we know,
Yet, filthy lucre held him like a net,
So, choosing wealth, he let the "kingdom" go.
The modern test of worthiness, to be
Admitted to the household of the Lord,
Too frequently depends on whether we
Surrender a PERCENTAGE of our hoard.

The accident of birth, of fortune, or mere luck,
Exalts a man, and he is widely known.
His wife and children (merely common truck)
Seem suddenly to great proportions grown.
The friends and neighbors of the olden days
Meet cool reception, should they dare to call;
They learn the difference in many ways
Between the very great and very small!

The master felt compassion for the weak,
Or sinful, who repentant came to him.
Some modern christians scarcely deign to speak
To one whose moral sight is somewhat dim.
Oft criticised themselves, in need of grace,
They leave "the wicked" to their lost estate.
The savior talked with sinners face to face.
We are too good for that—and far too great!

Whether in morals or in social walks,
This self-made "caste," this arrogance and pride,
All christian progress, all improvement balks.
It turns our effort and our prayers aside.
This shying brick at every house we pass,
(To keep all sinful people in their place)
But calls attention to our house of glass
And shows our grievous lack of christian grace.

Yet, he or she, who seeks to be forgiven,
To find a better path that upward leads,
May go direct by prayer to God in heaven,
Where not in vain the vilest ever pleads.
But should they dare approach us here below,
In seeking guidance toward the narrow gate;
With caution they should move, and very slow,
Remembering how small they are, while we are good
and great.

1906

A MISSIONARY.

A youth, inspired by missionary zeal
And by commandment found in holy writ,
Was moved with lofty impulse, and resolve,
Himself to seek some heathen lands, wherein
Were souls to save, and minds to mold and there
To preach the gospel on those foreign shores.
But first, some preparation he would have

For undertaking of such vast import.

Therefore, to college made his way, to learn
Whatever things might aid in saving souls.
To him, the college was a foreign land.

The city, was a wilderness of sin!—
How-be-it, 'tis no worse than others are;
Yet barbarous, and filled with worshippers
Of Mammon, Baal, Bacchus, Lucifer,
And Moloch, (who embraces all the rest!)—
But 'tis a Christian city, in a Christian land.

Ere long our youth perceived the harvest ripe,
And reapers in God's fields extremely few.

Therefore, determined he, to do his work
Among the heathen in his native land.
If haply he might be the instrument
Whereby some erring souls were turned from sin
Into the better way which leads to "life."

But could he work reform in those dark slums,
Or Christianize the multitudes of men
Who daily walk those streets in search of gold,
He well might hope to stand before his Lord
And hear the words "Well done, thou faithful man!"

Before engaging in this mighty work
He to his native village turns once more,
To his parental home.

Well pleased, I ween,
His parents were, to know their son would be
A missionary in his native land;
That no wild seas would roll, or tempest rage,
Between themselves, and their beloved child.—

Long absence from his native haunts, now gave
A new appearance to the village scenes.
And John,—(his name was something else, but John
Is quite a common apostolic name
And fits him fairly well, so call him John,)—
Beholding not a stone's throw from his home,
Some heathenish, and quite unchristian folk,

Profane, untaught, dishonest, lewd as Turk,
With no more self respect than cannibals,—
Felt all his missionary spirit rise
And urge him to make Christians of those men!

So, entering his closet, there to pray
For guidance from above, he first of all
Confessed his own mistakes, his sins of thought,
The manifold transgressions of his youth;
Rehearsing all his faults and wickedness!

And while he dwelt on these, he heard within
A voice which thundered in his ears, these words,
“REMOVE THE BEAM FROM THINE OWN EYE BEFORE
THOU LOOKEST ON THY NEIGHBOR!”

Straitway John

Arose; went forth among his friends, resolved
He would release one mortal soul, at least,
From bonds of sin, so far as in him lay!

No foreign shores he sought, nor city slums,
Nor e'en the vicious people round about:
For deep within his bosom slumbered fires
Requiring all his energies to quench!

And ere he conquered these, his life was spent,
His four score years and ten passed by; and John
Had gone to join the countless dead who rest
In mother earth.

But all his life had been
A sermon, and a psalm! Encouraging,
Inspiring, helpful to all things good.

His many neighbors loved to tell his deeds
Of kindness in sore straits, of gentle words;
Friendly remonstrance, or approving nod
Which helped them on their way.

And one at least
Labors in city slums, whose early life
Was saved from wreck by conscientious John;
Who casting out the beam from his own eye,
HAD SPREAD THE GOSPEL, PRACTICING AT HOME!

REFORMERS WHO QUIT OR BOLT.

I knew a reformer both earnest and brave
Who wildly the banner of freedom would wave
And declare he would BATTLE to free the poor slave!

But he didn't.

(In fact, he got all his wife's relation to enlist, and then voted tax on their property to raise bounty for other volunteers in order to protect himself from a draft.)

A United States senator, talking all night
Against burning greenbacks ("and he knew he was right");
Declared he would NEVER abandon the fight,

But he did!

(And he was made a cabinet officer, and incidentally laid up several millions of dollars in bank stock on earth, besides investing largely in futures.)

A poet declared, "I will fight till we win;
Until bars and saloons and all places of sin
Are utterly crushed, I will keep up my din!"

But she didn't!

(She is now off on another tack, and is agitating the protection of pigs while on their way to the pork barrel.)

Another brave hero is trying to show
That the birds are our friends—yes, even the crow;
And he says he'll keep at it FOREVER, you know!

But he won't!

(He will probably run off on a tangent and demand laws for a more humane way of dealing with worms and insects in general, including bedbugs, fleas and all microbes or bacteria of whatever name or nature.)

"The doom of mosquitoes seems very pathetic!
It is cruel, indeed, to give poison emetic.

Let mercy, provide them a strong anæsthetic!"

To be sure!

(Provided, of course, there is any chance for a graft in furnishing drugs.)

Now, a word to reformers so hot that they glow:

If you're somewhat short-winded, you'd better go slow—

Be sure you're not telling us WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW!

Will you?

(But I presume what I say will make no difference; so keep on with your rag-time reform medley if it amuses you.)

THE CUCKOO.

(Songs of the "Boss" in South Dakota.)

The "boss" walked out in early spring
And pondered by the way.

"I'd give" quoth he "most anything
To know what game to play!"

And as he strove his way to see,
A bird cried, from a roadside tree—
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!"

The schemer heard the songster's notes
And sprang from off the grass.
"Oh! thank my stars! I'll catch their votes
And this shall come to pass;
The cuckoo shall my model be!
The bird replied from soft-soap tree
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!"

And now these two, with cunning art
Go singing on their way.
Each one still acts the cuckoo part
And this is what they say,
"Let others hatch the hungry brood,

Supply the salaries and food!
Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!"

They leave their eggs in a well made nest,
Secure from public view.
The cuckoo likes the robin's best,
'Tis roomy, soft, and new.
The other likes the "ground bird" best,
He sings while approaching the Alliance nest
"Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!"

Should robin see the cunning cheat
And crack the cuckoo's pate:
And farmers check the schemer neat,
Or break that pretty slate,
The boys would cry upon the street
When the cuckoo "boss" they chance to meet—
 "Cuckoo tra la la,
 Cuckoo tra la la,
 Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo! Cuck-oo!"

1890

DISENCHANTED.

Herrick says, "I dare not ask a kiss,
I dare not beg a smile. For having that or this
I might grow proud the while. No, no, the utmost share
Of my desire shall be, Only to kiss the air, That lately
kiss-ed thee."

I too once felt that way, About a girl
I spark-ed: Until one fatal day To her I so
remark-ed. My longing met rude death. Poor Cupid
was dismiss-ed! (Her onion laden breath, Had
kissed the air I kiss-ed!)

1905

SONG OF THE BOSS.*

(Politics in South Dakota, 1892.)

Oh! I am the man who carries the vote
Of the heelers all in the tail of my coat
And with bank deposits to ballast my boat
I'll sail right into the Senate.

CHORUS: I am Mister Wickhem! A man of means!
I dabble in politics, butter and beans.
I handle offices, eggs and jeans,
And I am Boss in Hanson County.

My business talent's the thing that knocks.
I have worked quite hard at gathering rocks
And "helped the people" (by building blocks!)
And I ought to go to the Senate!—CHORUS.

I can flatter, cajole, and threaten too
When some fat office I have in view.
And I'll swear that black is white or blue,
If you'll help me into the Senate.—CHORUS.

In political mire I love to dig;
I can smoke cigars and take my swig,
And a man with a head that feels so big
Should certainly go to the Senate.—CHORUS.

I have aided the kicker to turn his coat;
I've assisted the farmer,—(by taking his note),
And I'd like to catch the "Alliance Goat"
And ride to the door of the Senate.—CHORUS.

But when I've ridden him up to the door
I'll take my place on the State House floor.

*Song designed to aid in a "good cause" (now endorsed by Bryan, Roosevelt, et al) to wit: the cause of the people! The populist editor who "suppressed" the song in 1892 was "At last overtaken by the 'judgment of heaven,' being killed by the lightning in 1907." He has my forgiveness.—M. P. W.

And "The Farmers' Alliance" shall see me no more;
No HAYSEEDS must enter the Senate.—CHORUS.

My spelling, may be, is somewhat awry:
But education is all in your eye.
I will knock the tariff higher'n the sky
If I get inside the State Senate.—CHORUS.

The Constitution is well enough
But Prohibition is mighty rough.
It needs a man who is up to snuff
To fix that up in the Senate.—CHORUS.

I've churned your butter, I've drilled a well,
I've planned a railroad from here to—hades!
By froth, and foam, and buncome, and swell,
I expect to reach the Senate.—CHORUS.

The Populists work both early and late,
But I've laid my wires and fixed my slate.
Still—"Matters are in—a—PRECURIOUS state,—
And I may not reach the Senate." (NOTE: But he did.)

SONG OF THE SPITTER.

Oh the snow! The beautiful snow!
We can spatter tobacco juice now as we go.
Our stock of saliva continues to flow
And we have to keep spewing it out, don't you know?
But women are marching up, row upon row,
All urging policemen to pinch us; and so
We are glad when the sidewalks are covered with snow
For a fine would reduce the amount of our dough;—
The snow, the snow, the beautiful snow!
It sets off tobacco juice well "doncher know;"
So let the snow fall, and the wild blizzard blow.
The law doesn't say we can't spit on the snow!

A SQUIB.

A party who signs himself Josh
Pronounces our arguments "slosh."
It puzzles his pate, how to make up a slate
And he "wants a few pointers, b'gosh!"
Like the girl who was crying one day,
And her teacher asked "What ails you pray?"
Said "that nasty Tom Dodds,
Throws big paper wads,
And he NEVER THROWS ANY MY WAY!"

A. LETTER TO BOYS.

There are a few things which I wish the boys who read, and think, would consider.

To begin with a subject I know something about.—What is the benefit which men receive, who use profane language and interject the name of Deity; between sentences, having no sort of relation to heavenly beings?

From fifty years experience, I cannot recall any personal benefit, or any admiration for myself, or others, who foolishly allowed this habit to grow upon them.

Unless it makes better men of us, why form such a habit?

Why use SMUTTY language? If you hear some one making low remarks about women, or girls; just think how you would regard him, were he talking thus about your mother, your sister, or some dear friend;—and decide whether you wish to become like unto him! —

Men sometimes tell what "fun" they had as boys committing offenses against people they disliked.—Will imitating them make you better citizens? Would you not respect yourselves more, if you never indulge in low disagreeable tricks?

Imitating bad behavior is starting toward the Reform School, or Penitentiary!

Why not start, right now, to build character?

Some old men will suggest to boys, rowdyism, as a piece of "fun"!

Doesn't this remind you of a gorilla in the zoo, teaching mischief to young monkeys?—Is he helping to give boys such characters as you desire?

Such a teacher started a burglars school, but blew himself and his pupils out of the room with nitroglycerine.

Is not bad advice to boys, likely to breed bad citizens?—Why be uncivil to older people, or to your companions?

Which succeeds best in business, one who respects himself and others; or a rowdy?

Which wins most friends? Which would appear best in Congress.

Lincoln remarked after the heated campaign resulting in his election,—during war and tumult,—“I have not knowingly placed a thorn in the side of any opponent!”

Did he develop such character by foolish and unmanly tricks, when a boy?

Buffalo Bill's sister placed great stress upon Mr. Cody's prominent trait as a boy: “His thoughtfulness about others!”

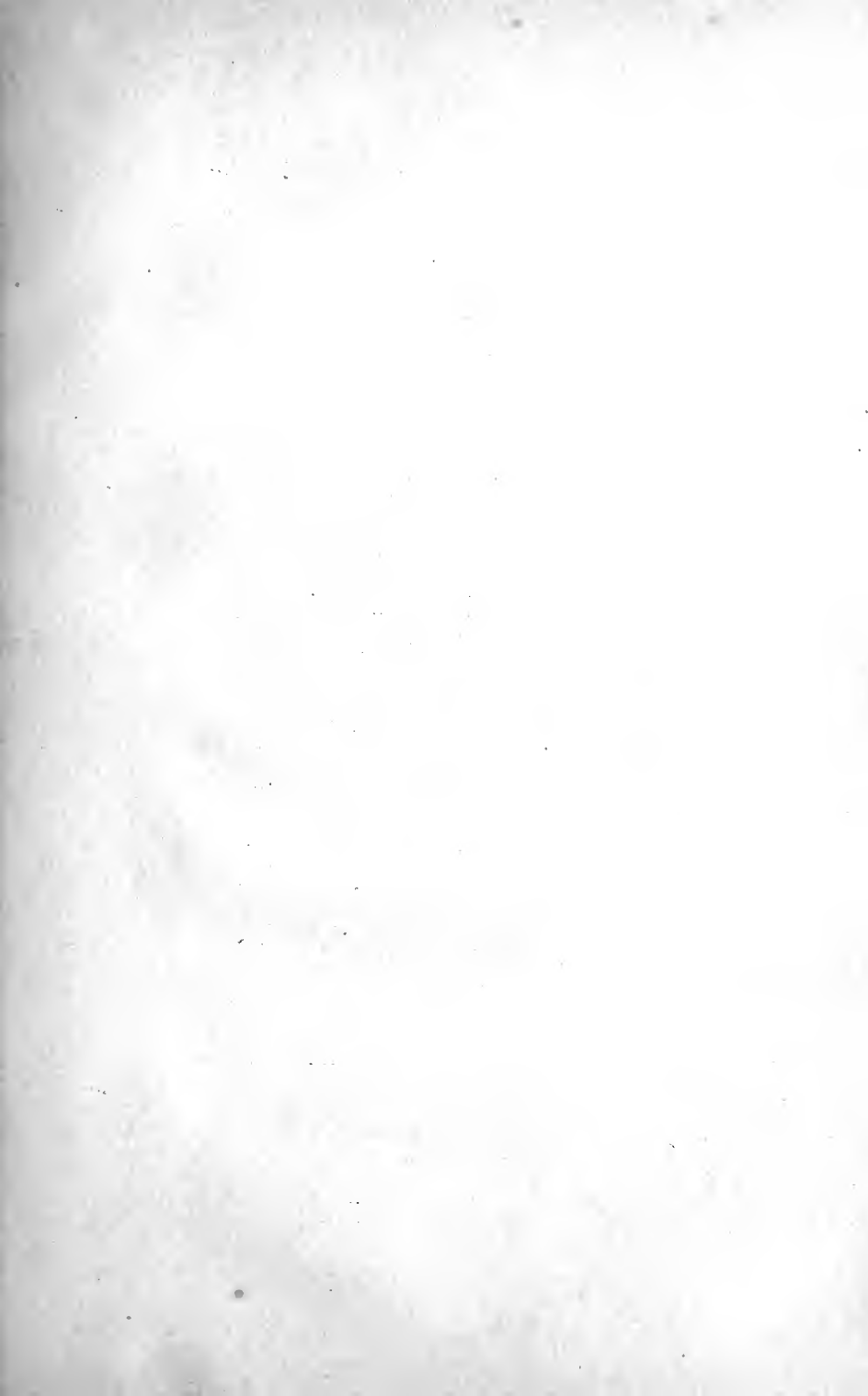
Does not that trait cause one to act like a gentleman?

Enlightenment, improvement and success, follow only as we avoid the mistakes; and cultivate the commendable traits, in whomsoever found.

Study of deviltry, helped the Younger boys to a life sentence. Different schools of vice send pupils to the prison, gallows and electric chair.—It is quite easy to become a rowdy, a hard case, a criminal! The most ignorant can take that course, and graduate.

Boys with BRAINS, can become gentlemen, worthy citizens, men of eminence, if they enter the proper class. It takes pluck, resolution and watchfulness; but the only thing which makes us better than cannibals, is CHARACTER.

Think of these things.

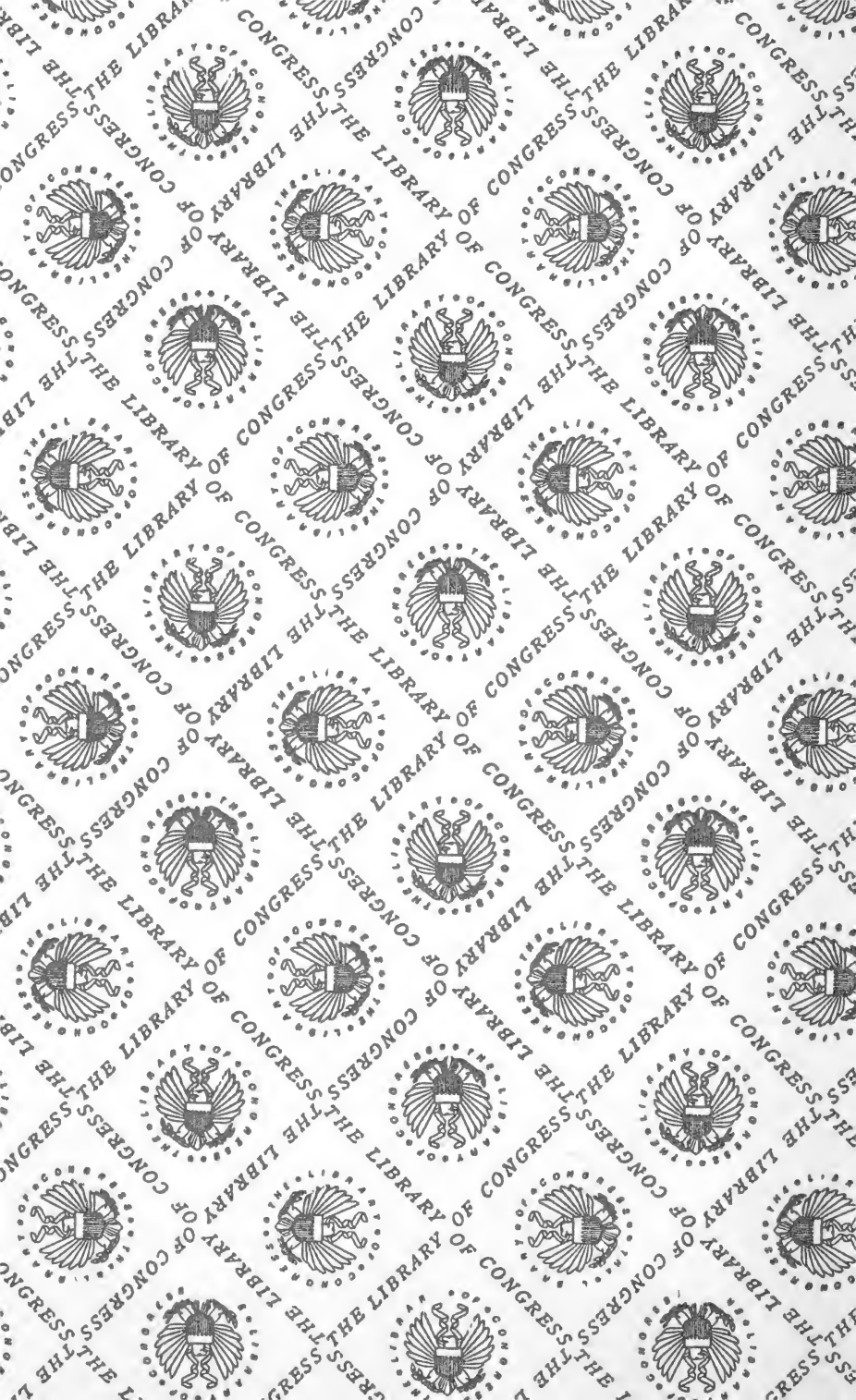


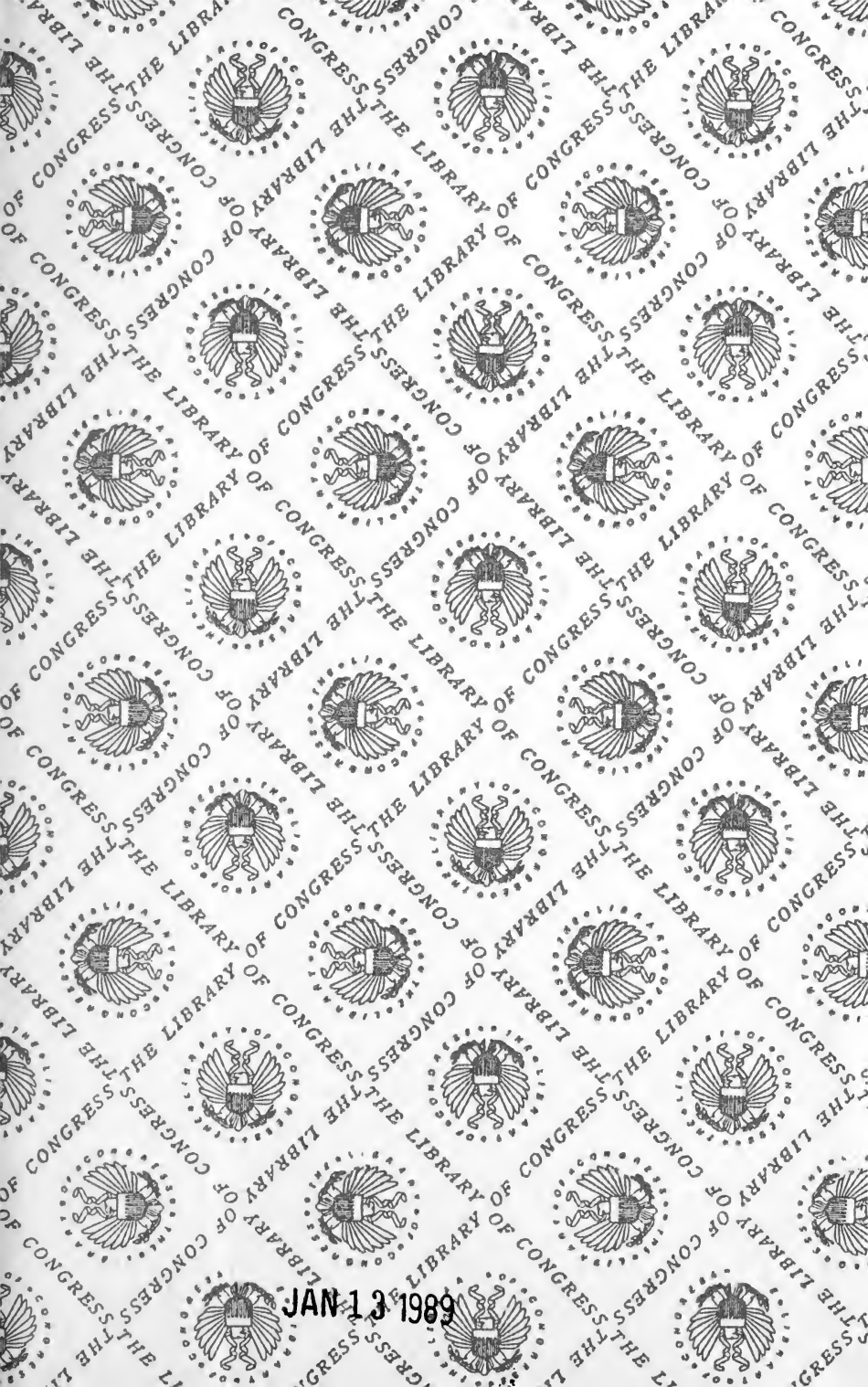
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